

NONSENSE:

*Being certain
Foolish Tales
told by a Father
to his Children in
'The Children's
Hour.'*

VOLUME IV

“Le Roman d'une Pussie Chat”

A TALE of ye OLDEN TIMES

PAR HENRIQUE (OLD
MAN) RINGTAIL



*Carefully, faithfully
and accurately translated
from the original Sanscrit
by FREDERICK ROGERS,
D. C. L., (Trin. Coll. Tor.) of
Osgoode Hall, Barrister-at-Law*

Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.
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**THIS BOOK IS
DEDICATED AND
INSCRIBED TO THE
MASTER'S CHILDREN
AND THEIR FRIENDS.**

Y^E POORE AUTHOR'S APOLOGIA

in the which he sheweth how this book came to be translated from the original Sanscrit into the "Queen's English" or "United States" and how it came to be printed.



HERE is a certain disease—probably an incurable one—which sometimes overtakes a man known to the Ancients by the learned term “*Cacoethes Scribendi*” and to Moderns as the “Writer’s Itch” or “the Itch for Scribbling.”

For quite a time—in fact for several years I have had the complaint in a mild form. It is only lately—within the last few months—that it has assumed its present severe type.

During the last few years once in a while I would write a Letter to the Press endeavoring to call public attention to the many and great undeveloped resources of that vast portion of country—that great North Land—now commencing to be popularly known as “New Ontario.”

Then within the last few years I have at different times compiled certain Pamphlets dealing with the same subject and the expense of printing and circulating the same has been kindly borne by the Dominion and Ontario Governments respectively.

If I had ended there it might perhaps have been better for a long-suffering—a much-suffering Public. But some months ago an earnest discussion was being carried on in the columns of that ably-conducted and widely-read journal, “The Daily Witness” (Montreal), concerning such vital and important subjects as “Christian Socialism and Ethical Preaching”—“Practical Christianity”—“The Church and the Poor,” etc.

Noticing several able Letters on the subject and wishing to give any assistance I could in the matter, I wrote an Article or Letter entitled “Christian Socialism and Ethical Preaching,” which was printed in the journal referred to. Then later on I wrote another Article and which appeared in the same journal in its issue of October 7th last (1899), “A Layman’s Thoughts Concerning the Future Life.”

The insidious malady still afflicting me and seeming to grow worse—although probably I did not recognize its effect at the time—I sat up late at night—literally “burning midnight oil”—preparing other Articles dealing with Religious and Social subjects—with the intention of bringing out a little Book to be entitled “Looking Backward and Forward, being the Thoughts of a Layman on the Eve of the Twentieth Century.”

At that time I labored under the delusion that it would not be very difficult to obtain a Publisher. I was in fact in the same hopeful and deluded condition as that in which “Old Man Ringtail” was in when he first finished writing the MS. of “Le Roman D'une Pussie Chat,” concerning which I will tell you in a few minutes, if you, Gentle Reader, will listen.

When I commenced to make enquiries I found that I was UNKNOWN—I was an Unknown Author; how could I reasonably expect any Publisher to bring out a Book dealing with Religious and Social questions and written by an UNKNOWN AUTHOR.

So I sorrowfully came to the conclusion that the time was not opportune to bring out my “Looking Backward and Forward.” I must write something which would be likely immediately to become popular with the Public and by the publication of which I could quickly become known and favorably known.

So, the malady still possessing me, I went on burning more “midnight oil”—and in fact following the example of “Old Man Ringtail.” If “The Wonderful Story of Win's Dodo” is ever published the Gentle Reader will know how hard and diligently “Old Man Ringtail” used to plod away at that precious “Syclopedia of hisen.” I came to the conclusion that if I were to write a Book partly humorous and partly grave it might be acceptable with the Public. So I went to work and I wrote the MS. of “Reveries and Reminiscences, Grave and Gay.” To illustrate this Book, and aided by the kindness of certain friends, I was enabled to gather together a large number of beautiful photographs showing “Nature in her wildest haunts,” water-falls, inland

lakes and streams, the inmost recesses of the forest, etc. But even with the help of these photographs I found on enquiry that a Publisher was an "unknown quantity," so to speak. I was UNKNOWN—AN UNKNOWN AUTHOR.

And sadly I commenced to reason the matter out with myself somewhat in this way: "Who are you—an UNKNOWN AUTHOR—that you think the able, intelligent "and discriminating Public are going to take an interest in "your Reveries and Reminiscences? What would people "generally care for your Reveries and Reminiscences? If "you were KNOWN it would be different. But you labor "under the misfortune of being UNKNOWN."

But—the malady seeming to get stronger the more I gave way to it and the more I burned "midnight oil"—I commenced to think that perhaps if I were to write a book entirely *humorous* people might take an interest in—poor me.

Now for a long time I have been a "Children's Playmate"—a great Lover of "The Youngsters." And I had become rather learned in the matter of "Fairy Tales," "Uncle Remus"—and Literature of that description. And for some time I had been a Story Teller myself. For years I had amused certain little children nearly every night—"In the Children's Hour"—by recounting to them "made up" Stories concerning Animals and Birds—and various other personages. And I must say—"though I do say it myself"—that my juvenile auditors seemed greatly to enjoy my "made up" stories.

Latterly the audience had generally consisted of my little girl Gertrude and her Pussy—"Gert's Pussy"—my little girl Winnie and her Doggie—"Dodo, a long-eared short-tailed Bow-wow"—and several Dollies.

So the idea came to me that I could and should write for the delectation of the Public some Humorous Animal Stories. My idea was that I would write a Series of Humorous Books. The Series to be entitled "Nonsense, being Certain Foolish Tales told by a Father to his Children in 'The Children's Hour.'"

And the result was that I continued to burn "midnight

oil" in the preparation of the MS. of the following "Foolish Tales:"

Vol. 1. The Wonderful Story of Gert's Pussy, being a Study in the Neglected Science of Pussyology.

Vol. 2. The Wonderful Story of Win's Dodo, being a Study in the Neglected Science of Bow-wowology.

Vol. 3. In the Land of the Grimalkins, being a further Study in the Neglected Science of Pussyology.

Vol. 4. "Le Roman D'une Pussie Chat."

Vol. 5. A Sequel to 'Le Roman.'

For the general information of my Readers I may say that "Le Roman" is a story supposed to have been written by a genius named "Henrique Ringtail"—generally known as "Old Man Ringtail." This gentleman is one of the Characters in "The Wonderful Story of Win's Dodo."

Shortly after I had finished the writing of the MS. of Vol. 5, or as a matter of fact—if I remember rightly—whilst I was writing the volume—a friend of mine saw in an American newspaper a Review or an advertisement concerning a little Book entitled "Gramma—the Autobiography of a Cat," (Dr. John S. Owen). My friend knew that I had been writing something on the same lines and that I was looking for a Publisher for some "Foolish Tales" dealing with Pussies and Bow-wows—so he kindly copied out the Review or the advertisement and gave it to me.

I wrote to the Publishers of "Gramma" and gave them an outline of the volumes of the proposed series "Nonsense," and to my pleasure they wrote me to the effect that they were much pleased with the account I had given them. After further correspondence it was decided that the Publishers of "Gramma" would at once bring out—as a burden on the unsuspecting Public as it were—one of the volumes of the Series.

The trouble was which volume to bring out first. The Publishers seemed to think that although the volumes had been written as parts of a "Series," it would not matter which volume were published first—that each volume could be published separately and as an independent book.

There is a precedent for this: "Beside the Bonnie Brier

Bush," "Auld Lang Syne" and "Kate Carnegie"** are volumes of a Series. And properly speaking they should perhaps read them in the order in which I have given; but still one can take up either volume of the Series and understand it and enjoy it without reference to the other volumes.

And so I feel sure it will be with the volumes of my Series—"Nonsense." At any rate each volume can be published separately and understood separately; time alone will show whether my "Foolish Tales" will be *enjoyed*.

Now in justice to myself I wish to say that I did not have the pleasure of seeing Dr. Owen's "Gramma" until after I had completed the MS. of Vol. 5 of the Series "Nonsense"—and in fact not until within the last few days.

I mention this because "Gert's Pussy" has been in the habit night after night of jumping up on the table at which I was busy writing—as the people in my household can testify—and relating to me with sundry "Micau's" and purrs the certain Wonderful Stories which appear in Volumes 1 and 3 of the Series.

There is a pretty photograph reproduced as a Frontispiece in "Gramma" which shows that wonderful cat sitting on the Doctor's table dictating to him "the Autobiography of a Cat." "Gert and Win" were very much surprised when they saw that picture because they said it was just the way "Gert's Pussy" told me her Wonderful Stories. And the same picture might in fact almost do as a Frontispiece for "The Wonderful Story of Gert's Pussy," only I am not as good looking a man as the learned Author of "Gramma, the Autobiography of a Cat." Doubtless too "Gert and Win" will claim that "Gert's Pussy is better looking than "Gramma."

By the way, it is my purpose to endeavor to get "Gert's Pussy" and "Win's Dodo" some day to try and sit still—in fact to "pose"—whilst a Photographer takes separate pictures of them. I know the Public would like to have a picture of "Gert's Pussy" as a Frontispiece to "The Wonderful Story of Gert's Pussy" and of "Dodo" as a Frontispiece to "The Wonderful Story of Win's Dodo."

**"Ian Maclaren"—the Rev. John Watson, D. D.

I should perhaps add that between volumes 2 and 3 of the Series "Nonsense" I found time by burning more "midnight oil" to write the MS. of a little book entitled "The Book which was never Written." This Book is a little book written somewhat on the same lines as that little work which has done so much good in the world and which has comforted so many sorrowing hearts, "The Gates Ajar."* I hope my little work when it is published will also be the means of doing some good in the world and of helping to lead men, women and little ones in the footprints of the Master.

I perhaps should add that all the volumes of the Series "Nonsense" are dedicated and inscribed--

"To the Master's Children and their Friends,"
and that the little "Book which was Never Written" is dedicated and inscribed--

"To all who love the Master's Children."

Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, August 6th, 1900.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT



HEN one sits down at this late date in the History of the Literature of the World to write a Story or a "Roman," it is, I presume, impossible for him to be entirely original in his remarks.

At all events his writing will to a greater or less extent be moulded or influenced—even although perhaps unconsciously—by that of those who have gone over Life's Pathway before him.

I feel this may be true in my own case. Without being guilty of Plagiarism to any extent whatever I feel that perhaps I might not have been able to have thrown any light at all on the wonderful Subterranean Channel which I have supposed may lead from the Land of the Grimalkins into Lake Superior if I had not years ago read something Rider Haggard wrote concerning some subterranean channel in Africa. I forget entirely the particulars, but it seems to me that years ago I read something very weird and mysterious written by the Author to whom I have referred—something referring to a Subterranean Channel supposed to be situate somewhere in the wilds of the Continent mentioned.

Then I have a dim recollection that the same eloquent writer used to write about a Queen—or rather I think it was a couple of Queens—who lived somewhere in the heart of Africa. And I think the Kingdom of the Queens was only reached via a journey through a Subterranean Channel. But it was years ago when I read the book or books referred to and my recollection of what I read is very dim. I can assure the Gentle Reader there has been no Plagiarism on my part and that if I have in any way copied Rider Haggard I have done so unconsciously.

I wish it to be understood that this statement also applies to anything contained in the Third volume of these so "Foolish Tales." Then it is only fair to myself to state that whereas I do not know or remember whether or not Rider Haggard had any foundation whatever for his Subterranean Channel—any *raison d'être* so to speak—in my case or

rather in the case of my Subterranean Channel—there is the evidence or at any rate the incident set forth in the Epilogue to the said Third Volume of these so "Foolish Tales." I have also read some rather strange and weird "yarns" written by that very original novelist, M. Jules Verne—I cannot say whether, unconsciously, he has had any influence on the pages of "Nonsense."

But the Writer of these Foolish Tales must acknowledge the debt of gratitude he is under to Anna Sewell, "Lewis Carroll" (the Rev. C. L. Dodgson), Joel Chandler Harris, William Seton-Thompson and Dr. John S. Owen. These gifted Authors, believing themselves that the "animals and beasteses" can talk and do talk, have given to the world those beautiful and instructive little works: "Black Beauty," "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," "Uncle Remus—His Songs and His Sayings—the Folk Lore of the Old Plantation," "Wild Animals I have Known," and "Gramma, the Autobiography of a Cat."

As to the character of Mlle. Violette Carigny—La Belle Modiste Aux Dollies; I feel that it is likely I may, although perhaps unconsciously, have received my ideas from that ever dear Child Lover, Charles Dickens. The Gentle Readers will remember Miss Jennie Wren, the Doll's Dress-maker.*

There are certain sentences contained in the following pages which I am glad and thankful I have been able to write—words concerning dear little Children—the Master's Children—which I might never have written or have thought to have written—although I am myself a Child-Lover and a Children's Playmate—if I had not lately had the pleasure of reading that beautiful little book—recently published—"Santa Claus's Partner."**¹ The wish of my heart is that in these "Foolish Tales" I may have been enabled not only to have written words which will lead men, women and children to a greater love for the beautiful in Nature—and to a deeper sense of thankfulness to the great Father in Heaven who "made and loveth all,"**² but that

*Our mutual friend.

** Thomas Nelson Page.

** "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

I also may have been enabled to have written words which will lead men, women and children to lead more unselfish, i. e., more Christ-like lives—and to be kinder not only one to the other, but also to our "Four-footed Friends" and our Friends the Birds.

For the two maps or sketches which accompany this volume the Translator is indebted to the kindness of his friend, Miss Edith K. Wismer.

"And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
"Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
"Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

"As You Like It," Act II., Scene 1. William Shakespeare.

"He prayeth best, who loveth best
"All things both great and small;
"For the dear God who loveth us,
"He made and loveth all."

"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE



AM about to commence the hard work of translating from the classic Sanscrit into Colloquial "Queen's English" or "United States" Mr. Henrique Ringtail's Tale of ye Olden Days.

I really have felt sorry for Mr. Ringtail. Ever since "Win's Dodo" related to me the arduous efforts the old gentleman had made to get a Publisher my sympathies commenced to go out to him.

His experience in endeavoring to find a Publisher among the gentlemen of Arch Fraternity at Michipicoten and Satehewamy seems to have been a very sad one.*

It seemed to me that perhaps if I were to translate "Le Roman" into the English language and then submit the copy to an enterprising Publisher in some larger city than either Michipicoten or Satehewamy, I might be able, perhaps, to get the same published. I therefore asked the learned Douhabor to explain the position to "Old Man Ringtail" and suggest that he kindly lend me the copy for a few days, and that I would, with the help of Gert's Pussy, do my best to make as fair and accurate a translation as possible—considering my rather limited knowledge of "the sanscrit."

If in the course of the following pages the "Gentle Reader" comes on anything open to criticism—anything which might have been better said—then I ask that our reader do not blame the learned Author of "Le Roman"—let him blame the Translator: the fault will have arisen from my imperfect knowledge of the classic sanscrit and the difficulty of putting into English idiom sentences which are so eloquent and easily intelligible in the original.

I suppose it is very much the same in the case of any translation; it is probably often impossible to convey the very same meaning which was intended in the original writing or to convey it in as apt and eloquent a way.

Before I commence my hard work may I say a few words myself to the Gentle Reader and thus unburden myself of something I have on my mind—to the end that if "Le

*See Vol. 2 of these "Foolish Tales."

Roman" in its English form finds a Publisher, my own few words by way of Preface may also be read by at least a few if not by many?

You see a Book is a vehicle—a carrier—a messenger; it is either a vehicle—a carrier of truth or of falsehood—a messenger of good or of evil—its influence is necessarily for well-being or ill.

Amongst the many writers who have realized this truth perhaps none is more pre-eminent than that eloquent and deservedly-popular Authoress, Marie Corelli.

She is a writer of Prose-Poetry almost without an equal. Her pen-paintings are so vivid—so beautiful.

Take, for instance, her wonderful description of the beauty of the sky and of the earth at the dawn of the first Easter morning when Barabbas watches the coming of the first Easter tide.*¹

The heart of the eloquent Authoress is filled with love and gratitude to the great Father for all His goodness as seen in the wonders of the Earth and the sky; and was it not another great Poet—an inspired one—who said: "Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh?"*²

In that beautiful Prose-Poem "Ardath" Marie Corelli has tried in her own way to teach the very same lesson which that eloquent and popular writer, the Rev. Charles M. Sheldon, has been trying to teach in another way. We are all Stewards: the great Master has given to us various and different gifts—we cannot all speak or write alike.

The author of "In His Steps," "The Crucifixion of Phillip Strong," and "The Miracle at Markham" cannot write in the same way as the author of "Ardath"—but each eloquent writer has had the same object in view: Alwyn, the great Poet—the author of "Nourhalma"—lives but to himself—and within himself.

Of himself he could have truly used the words so aptly and forcibly quoted by the late Prof. Drummond, in that eloquent peroration which closes that classic little work,

*¹ "Barabbas." Marie Corelli.

*² David.—Psalms.

"The Greatest Thing in the World"—

"I lived for myself, I thought for myself,
"For myself, and none beside—
"Just as if Jesus had never lived,
"As if He had never died."

Alwyn is led to accept Christianity—he becomes a simple, humble follower of the Master and then as his friend Villiers says, "From an embittered, sarcastic, disappointed, violently "ambitious man, he had become softened, gracious, kindly"—showing the greatest tenderness and forethought for "others, even in small every-day trifles, while for himself he "took no care." (Page 488, Chap. V., Part III.)

There are several sentences in that fifth chapter of the Third Part of the Book which deserve attention. Alwyn has become famous—a certain brilliant society lady—the Duchesse de la Santoisie—has invited a large number of literateurs and savants to meet the new "lion." Some of those present are inclined to be "skeptical" or to pretend to be skeptical concerning religious matters; in some quarters it was apparently perhaps considered a little fashionable to be a little skeptical.

It was a surprise to some of these fashionable would-be skeptics to listen to such eloquent and forcible language as this from the literary "lion" of the hour: " 'Nay, then,' said Alwyn quickly, with a darkening flash in his eyes, 'if " 'women give up faith, let the world prepare for strange " 'disaster! Good, God-loving women—women who pray, " 'women who hope, women who inspire men to do the best " 'that is in them—these are the safety and glory of nations. " 'When women forget to kneel, when women cease to teach " 'their children the 'Our Father,' by whose grandly simple " 'plea humanity claims Divinity as its origin, then shall we " 'learn what is meant by 'men's hearts failing them for fear " 'and looking after those things which are coming on the " 'earth.' A woman who denies Christ repudiates Him who " 'above all others made her sex as free and honored as " 'everywhere in Christendom it is. He never refused " 'woman's prayer. He had patience for her weakness,

"pardon for her sins; and any book written by woman's hand that does Him the smallest shadow of wrong is to 'me as gross an act as that of one who, loaded with benefits, 'scruples not to murder his benefactor.'" (Page 496.)

One gets the idea from reading "The Romance of Two Worlds" and "Ardath" that the gifted Authoress is a member of that particular branch of the "great Church Catholic," called by Protestants the *Roman Catholic Church*—by way of distinction.

But at all events one feels sure the eloquent writer of "Ardath" is a *broad churchwoman*. The husband of the Duchess says to the "lion" of the evening, "I confess I am surprised, Mr. Alwyn, that you, a man of such genius and ability, should be still in the leading-strings of the 'Church.' 'There is no Church,' returned Alwyn quietly. 'The world is waiting for one. The *Alpha Beta* of Christianity has been learned and recited more or less badly by the children of men for nearly two thousand years; the actual grammar and meaning of the whole language has yet to be deciphered. There have been, and are, what are called *Churches*—one especially which, if it would bravely discard mere vulgar superstition, and accept, absorb, and use the discoveries of science instead, might and possibly will, blossom into the true, universal, and pure Christian fabric. Meanwhile, in the shaking to and fro of kings, the troublous sifting of the wheat from the chaff, we must be content to follow by 'the way of the Cross' as best we can. Christianity has fallen into disrepute, probably because of the self-remuneration it demands; for in this age the primal object of each individual is manifestly to serve self only. It is a wrong road, a side-lane that leads nowhere; and we shall inevitably have to turn back upon it and recover the right path—if not now, why then hereafter.' His voice had a tremor of pain within it. He was thinking of the millions of men and women who were voluntarily wandering astray into a darkness they did not dream of; and his heart, the great, true heart of the poet, became filled with an indescribable passion of yearning. 'No wonder,' he mused, 'no

"wonder that Christ came hither for the sake of love!—to
 "rescue, to redeem, to save, to bless! O Divine sympathy
 "for sorrow! If I, as a man, can feel such aching pity for
 "the woes of others, how vast, how limitless, how tender
 "must be the pity of God." (Page 497.)

Then when at last Alwyn can leave the necessarily uncongenial company of the people who had been called together to "lionize" him—as it were—he feels he is breathing a different atmosphere. The Book goes on to say:

"Once outside the house, he drew a long breath of relief,
 "and glanced gratefully up at the sky, bright with a glistening multitude of stars. Thank God, there were worlds "in that glorious expanse of ether, peopled with loftier types "of being than what is called humanity"! (Pages 501, 502.)

Hundreds of years previously almost the same thought had come to the good, patient old monk, Thomas A. Kempis, writing in his monastery cell, and he wrote these words:

"The greatest of the saints avoided the company of men "as much as they could, and rather chose to serve God in "secret.

"As often as I have been amongst men, said one, I have "returned less a man; this we often experience when we "talk long."*1

And the eloquent Preacher and Poet who wrote that inspiring Poem, "Trust in God and do the right"—had very much the same idea in his mind when he penned the words:

"Cease from man and look above thee,
 "Trust in God and do the right."**2

Doubtless every author when he sits down to write should feel that he has a message to deliver to the world—and, with God's help, he should endeavor faithfully and to the best of his ability to deliver that message even if "Ardath" contained no other message to the world than what is contained in the opening lines of the last chapter entitled "In the Cathedral"—the book would not have been written in vain.

The duty of thankfulness to the Great Father has never

*1) "Of the Imitation of Christ." Chap. 20, Book I.

*2) Macleod, Norman, the Rev. D. D.

been set forth more eloquently, more forcibly or more beautifully:

"A booming, thunderous, yet mellow sound!—a grand, "solemn, sonorous giving of full and weighty rhythm, striking the air with deep, slowly measured resonance, like the "rolling of close cannon! Awake, all ye people! Awake to "prayer and praise! for the night is past and sweet morning "reddens in the east; another day is born—a day in which "to win God's grace and pardon; another wonder of light, "movement, creation, beauty, love! Awake, awake!

"Be glad and grateful for the present joy of life—this "life, dear harbinger of life to come! Open your eyes, ye "drowsy mortals, to the Divine blue of the beneficent sky, "the golden beams of the sun, the colour of flowers, the "foliage of trees, the flash of sparkling waters!

"Open your ears to the singing of birds, the whispering "of winds, the gay ripple of children's laughter, the soft "murmurs of home-affection!—for all these things are "freely bestowed upon you with each breaking dawn, and "will you offer unto God *no* thanksgiving? Awake! awake! "The voice you have yourselves set in your high cathedral "towers reproaches your lack of love with its iron tongue, "and summons you all to worship Him, the ever-glorious, "through whose mercy alone you live!" (Pages 553-554.)

Some one has said—did he not?—was it not the inspired Poet David?—

"New every morning is His Love."

One of the matters in this world which one cannot understand is the great ingratitude towards the great Father—"Le Bon Dieu"—which seems to exist.

One thinks with such wonder and regret that there are so many people who from hour to hour and from day to day and from year to year seem to lead such *thankless lives*; that there are many, many people who eat the food, God—the all-bountiful Father provides for them—without ever thinking of thanking Him for His great goodness; that there are many people who can look up into the starry sky

—God's great Firmament of Beauty—without a thought of gratitude to the one who "made and loveth all."*¹

How can any one even gaze into God's great sky without recalling the words of that great lover of nature and inspired Poet who said:

"Oh Lord—how manifest are all Thy works!

"In wisdom hast Thou made them all."**²

And then the gifted Authoress has made the novel "Ardath" end so well and so happily—the Hero gets the Heroine—"and they all live happily ever afterwards."

All novels and story books should end that way.

This world does not need sad books—sad stories. Far too many sad stories have already been written.

My own candid opinion—confidentially, dear "Gentle Reader"—and "between you and me and the gate post"—as the saying is—is that if a Novelist or a Poet cannot make his novel or poem end happily and well he should not write at all.

That is one thing I like about the "Uncle Remus" Stories—and about most "Fairy Tales;" they generally end up all right. As Gert and Win say, they commence "Once upon a time," and end "And they all-lived happily ever afterwards."

And that is as it should be.

And there is this point to be observed about the "Uncle Remus" Stories and about "Fairy Tales" generally: if there is a villain in the story and if it becomes necessary that he be killed off or done away with—it is done in such a funny, humorous way that you cannot help but laugh—no matter how kind and tender-hearted you may be.

If the Gentle Reader does not entirely grasp my meaning let him read silently to himself (or preferably let him read aloud to some "chilluns") the thirteenth chapter of "Uncle Remus"—which is entitled "The Awful Fate of the Wolf."

Since writing the above lines I have come across the following pretty little poem. I append it to this Preface because it illustrates the idea which I have been trying to

*(1) "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

*(2) David. Psalms.

**"Uncle Remus: His Songs and his Sayings: The Folk Lore of the Old Plantation." Joel Chandler Harris.

convey to the mind of the "Gentle Reader," viz: that all stories, romances and poems should end well.

The Poem was written by Carolyn Wells and was contained in the "Family Herald and Weekly Star" (Montreal) in its issue of September 13th, 1898.

This morning I came across the page on which the Poem appeared—the pretty pictures caught my eye at once—and I cut out that part of the page which contained the Poem and the pictures, and I append it to my MS. thus:



Once there were some silly kittens,
And they knitted woolv mittens
To bestow upon the freezing Hottentots;

Then the kittens, almost weeping,
Came to where a cow lay sleeping,
And they woke her with the piteous request



But the Hottentots refused them,
Saying that they never used them
Unless crocheted of red with yellow spots.



So the silly little kittens
Took their blue and white striped mittens
To a bear who lived within a hollow tree;

"Won't you wear our mittens furry?"
Said the cow: "My dears, don't worry,
I will put them on as soon as I am dressed."



The bear responded sadly,
"I would wear your mittens gladly,
But I fear they are too gay for such as me."

Then the cow put on her bonnet,
With a wreath of roses on it,
And a beautiful mantilla, fringed white;



And she donned the pretty mittens,
While the silly little kittens
Clapped their paws in admiration at the
sight.

And within the last day or two my attention has also been called to an interesting and most delightful little book lately issued from the Press and entitled "Santa Claus's Partner." I mention this little book because the writer* has endeavored in his own way to teach the same great truth which Charles Dickens in his way taught the world in "A Christmas Carol," the same truth which the Rev. Charles M. Sheldon has lately taught in that already well-known little work, "In His Steps," the truth that we are all God's stewards with respect to the wealth and possessions which, in His great goodness, He gives us—and that it is only when we recognize that great truth and whilst we recognize it we really can be happy ourselves: in making others happy we are making ourselves happy.

This little book—"Santa Claus's Partner"—puts this truth before the reader very clearly:

"Ten minutes later Livingstone was seated at the table "with an appetite like a school boy's. It was the happiest "meal Livingstone had eaten in many a long day; for, all "alone as he was, he was not alone. Thought-of-others sat "at the board and a cheery companion it is." (Page 156.)

"As Livingstone mounted the stair, though he was sensible of fatigue, it was the fatigue of the body, so delicious "to those who have known that of the mind, and he felt pity "as well as loathing for the poor, worn creature who had "climbed the same stair a few hours before. (Page 157.)

"He went to bed and slept as he had not slept for months, "perhaps for years—not dreamlessly, but the dreams were "pleasant. Now and then lines of vague figures appeared "to him, but a little girl with a smiling face came and played "bo-peep with him over them, and presently sprang up and "threw her arms about his neck and made him take her in "a sleigh to a wonderful shop where they could get mar- "vellous presents; among them Youth, and Friendship, and "Happiness. (Pages 158, 159.)

"'Let's go and have a game of blind-man's buff; I am "beginning to feel young again,' he said, and linking his "arm in Clark's, he dragged him back to the others, where,

*Thomas Nelson Page.

"in a few minutes they were all of one age, and a very riot of fun seemed to have broken loose. (Page 168.)

"The day seemed to have been one long dream of delight. "From the moment when he had turned to go after the little "child to ask her to show him the way to help others, he "had walked in a new land; lived in a new world; breathed "a new air; been warmed by a new sun." (Page 173.)

If Charles Dickens had been living one might have thought "Boz" had had a hand in the preparation of "Santa Claus's Partner." The same master-hand which so vividly threw on the canvas the portraits of the Cherrybyle Brothers*¹ and Old George*² might have been expected to have drawn the beautiful pen-picture of "Berryman Livingstone," who in his later life acknowledges to the full the Doctrine of the Stewardship and follows the Master in the same way as that in which the wealthy Scrooge and the wealthy Cheerybyle Brothers followed Him.

And, like them, he was made very happy. One cannot spend his life and the means with which God hath blessed him in making others happy without being made happy himself.

Charles Dickens beautifully expressed this truth when in the concluding words of "Nicholas Nickleby"—speaking of the Cheerybyle Brothers—he said: "The twin brothers "retired. Who needs to be told that *they* were happy? "They were surrounded by happiness of their own creation, "and lived but to increase it."

It is indeed a glad and hopeful "sign of the times" that such books as "Santa Claus's Partner" are being written. It is even a better and more hopeful sign that such books are so popular and are being so widely read.

What a happy world this would be—what an enjoyable world in which to live—if a large percentage of the rich men and women of the world would believe in the great truth—the Doctrine of the Stewardship—so beautifully taught by the books to which I have just referred. May not we all reverently say, "God speed the day?" O I do

*¹ "Nicholas Nickleby."

*² "A Christmas Carol."

hope for the sake of the Master's children that the day may soon dawn when the number of "Cheerybyle Brothers," "Old Scrooges" and "Berryman Livingstones" will be largely increased and that we may meet them—humbly following "In His Steps"—everywhere, and in all the walks of Life.



LE ROMAN D'UNE PUSSIE CHAT

A TALE OF YE OLDEN TIMES.

A Tragedy, Opera Bouffe, Matinee, and Children's
Pantomime Combined.

PAR HENRIQUE (Old Man) RINGTAIL.

B I L L O F T H E P L A Y
THE CAST.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Elfie. Only Daughter of the Laird of Summertrees. She becomes the first Queen in the Land of the Grimalkins. One of the "Bonnie Leddies."

Grimalkin the First. The First and only King in the Land of the Grimalkins. He resigns his Throne in favor of a Queen and becomes a Sheep Rancher in the Blue Mountains.

The Laird of Summertrees.

Retta. The niece of the Laird of Summertrees—the inseparable friend of Elfie. When the latter becomes Queen of the Land of the Grimalkins Retta becomes her maid-and lady-in waiting. Retta is also one of "the Bonnie Leddies."

Ulric. Le Sieur D'Ulric—one of "the Queen-Makers"—a Sheep Rancher in the Blue Mountains.

Machelle. The neighbor and great friend of D'Ulric. M. Machelle is also a Sessional Writer in the Noble and Hereditary House of Sieurs. He is also one of "the Queen-Makers."

"Old John." The faithful servant and follower of the Laird of Summertrees and of "the Bonnie Leddies."

Mlle. Violette "Ma Violette—sweet violet"—Une Belle Modiste aux Dollies.

Old Man Covet Grab. A hard-hearted money-lender, usurer and miser. His motto is "business is business," but he does not sufficiently beware of the widders and so he is cotched up wid.

The Hon. Brer Heavyweight Holdemtight. The Premier and Minister of Agriculture—the Leader of "the Ins"—"the Mauves."

Brer Feather-stone Johnsing. The Leader of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition in the House of Commons—the Leader of "the Outs," "the Blues."

The Hon. the Member for South Pussandra in the Common's House.

Oscar the Sage. "The Hermit of the Mountains."

Mr. Williamson. The honest yeoman who owns the two "cow bossies."

Mrs. Williamson. The wife of Mr. Williamson, "the lady who owns the lovely pansy beds."

"Old Man Jackson." "An enterprising merchant at "The Corners." He has been eddicated at a "Bizness Collidge" in "Little Muddy York."

"Sis Susan Mary Jackson." The fair wife of "old man Jackson." It is supposed by some antiquarians that it was in honor of this lady that the appellation "the Sue" and "the Susan Mary" were given to

the classic spot theretofore known as "The Corners."

Old Man-O'Flaherty.

A prosperous farmer living in the country back of "The Sue."

The Misses O'Flaherty.

The fair ladies who opened the "milliner shop" at "The Corners."



Act I.

THE VILLAIN IN THE ASCENDANT.

SCENE: In the Wilds of "New Ontario."

TEMPORE: King William the Fourth, of England, and King Grimalkin the First, of The Land of the Grimalkins.



NCE upon a time in ye olden Days there lived a sweet and graceful young Lady. Not that there was or is anything unusual or startling in that assertion, because all young Ladies and all middle-aged Ladies and all elderly Ladies have been and are sweet and graceful.

But this particular young Lady was particularly sweet. Her name was "Elfie." Her father was the Laird of Summertrees.

At one time he owned a large Estate or Ranch and was considered very wealthy, but gradually his lands and his goods had melted away—faded away—as it were—until he had hardly any possession left which he could call his own.

The Laird and the fair Elfie lived on the last and only piece of land which yet remained to them out of the "broad acres" which once bore the name of Summertrees."

People largely blamed a certain money-lender—"Old Man Covet Grab," for the losses and misfortunes which had seemed of late years to fall so thickly on the head of the present Laird of Summertrees.

No one seemed to know just exactly how or in what manner the Laird had got into the clutches of the greedy money-lender. It was a matter of history to a large extent. It was generally supposed, however, that the estate of Summertrees was already largely encumbered when the present Laird came into possession, and that it was in the effort to free the estate from some of its burden that the Laird became further involved and to an extent which seemed hopeless.

The Laird was not much of a "hand at business"—as the saying is—he had never been to any of those places they

call "Bizness Collidges." He was certainly no match for such an astute "business man" as was "Old Man Covet Grab."

Matters were now so much involved that the position really seemed hopeless. The Laird did not understand how it had all come about—and if he did not see through matters it goes without saying that his winsome daughter did not understand the position.

But she saw two things pretty clearly—first that matters were very much involved and secondly, that the old money-lender was persecuting her and making her very miserable with his attention.

For, absurd as it may seem, the old miser really aspired to the hand of "la Belle de Summertrees"—as some one poetically had called the Laird's fair daughter.

The young lady did not treat him rudely, but she tried to show him in every way possible that his suit was a hopeless one. Sometimes she thought she would mention the matter to her father and thus rid herself of the obnoxious suitor. But then on reflection it occurred to her that perhaps she had better not mention the matter, as it might only make business matters worse for her father.

He, on his part, had no idea that the covetous old miser had set his wishes on such a fair prize; and it was with feelings of amazement and repulsion that he listened to the old man one day as he laid bare his plans and his wishes in the matter.

There was a mortgage on the remaining few acres of the Estate—the old Manor House and the few acres immediately surrounding it. The mortgage was some days overdue and the Laird was not surprised when he was told "Old Man Covet Grab" had called to see him. At the time the Laird was sitting in his Library by the open window. This window was a door-window—so to speak—and it opened on to the large verandah which surrounded two sides of the old Manor House.

The Laird had just had breakfast and was comfortably smoking a pipe which his winsome daughter had filled with her fair hands.

Elfie had just left her father for a little while—there were some household matters needing her attention and she had just tripped away gaily, playfully blowing a kiss to her father and telling him she would be back in a few minutes and would bring Retta with her.

Retta, by the way, was the Laird's niece—a young lady about Elfie's age and her inseparable companion. People often thought they were sisters, as they were always together. But, whilst Elfie was fair, with golden tresses and eyes of liquid blue her companion was a brunette—a dark-haired, dark-eyed beauty. The Laird loved them equally well—they were his playmates—his comrades.

The two girls between them, with the help of "Old John," easily attended to the simple menage of the Laird's household. "Old John" was a character in his way. That was the only name by which he was known far and wide over the country-side.

He had always lived on the Summertrees estate and had become an essential part of the little household. One could not very well think of the Summertrees family without thinking of the little old man who had almost "from time immemorial"—as the saying is—been the faithful servant and retainer of the Laird of Summertrees.

Years ago, when the outlook for the family had commenced to look gloomy and forbidding, the Laird had suggested two or three times to "Old John" that in his own interest the faithful servant should take service elsewhere—that he should attach himself to some family whose fortunes—so to speak—were in the "ascendant" and not in the "descendant"—and the Laird had kindly offered to make the matter his own and to try and find amongst some of his friends a suitable service for the old man. But the faithful retainer had taken the matter so much to heart and the very thought of ever leaving the service of the Summertrees family seemed so much to distress him that the Laird had dropped the subject and had never since referred to it.

The old man had said, "Does the Laird think 'Old John' would wish to leave the old Manor as long as he can do a 'tap of work'?"

"But," said the Laird, "suppose we have no money to pay you, John? We would not have you work for nothing."

"I don't care about that," the old man had said. "As long as there is a crust to eat on the old place, I would rather eat it here with the ones I love so much than to have plenty and live amongst strangers."

And then "Old John" had added—half to himself—and half aloud—"And what would the bonnie young leddies" (he always called them "the bonnie young leddies"—when speaking of them) "do without 'Old John'?"

"And," he continued, "who would look after the Kale and the Spinach and the Asparagus and the early Rhubarb and the Lettuce and the Radishes? And who would see to the weeding of the strawberry beds? And who would prune the trees?"

And as he put these questions partly to himself and partly to his master, the old man looked out blankly over the big, well-kept garden. The conversation took place on the large verandah which overlooked the garden. What could the Laird do but grasp the old man's hand in a warm embrace and say: "We all know if the family of Summertrees has no 'other friend, they have one in you, John." That was several years ago, and although matters had steadily gone from bad to worse—and gradually acre after acre had gone into the clutches of the old money-lender—"Old John" still remained the faithful servitor of the Summertrees family, and it was his particular pride that the Summertrees garden every spring produced the earliest Rhubarb and the earliest Radishes, Lettuce, Spinach and Asparagus, and that strawberry beds were always well-weeded and bore the earliest and most luscious strawberries and that the fruit trees were always properly pruned.

And in the kitchen "the bonnie young leddies" could not very well have got on without him; he built the fire—brought in fuel carried from the spring almost endless pails of water—and all day long was doing "no end of chores," and in a hundred ways saved his fair young mistresses many a step and many a labor.

They, on their part, looked on the old man as a brother, and if he had been their real brother they could not have showed him more kindness.

Well, Elfie had not left her father on that beautiful summer morning more than about five minutes when she returned and announced Mr. Covet Grab. After his daughter had retired the Laird courteously asked his visitor to be seated, and then waited to know his errand.

The old usurer shuffled uneasily in his chair for a few minutes and then said: "Well, I suppose, Mr. Summertrees, you know the reason why I have called this morning "to see you?"

The Laird not making any reply, the old man commenced to fumble in his pockets and brought out a note book, and, looking at it, read:

"May 1st. Seventh mortgage Summertrees due—principal and 1 year's interest. Last year's interest still in arrear! Now, Laird, do you wish me to go into the figures again? When I was here some weeks ago I went into the figures pretty carefully—but if you wish me to do so, I will "go into them again."

"No, Mr. Covet Grab, I really will not trouble you to go "into the figures again."

"Well, sir, it is now the middle of June. I have allowed "you six weeks' grace. I hope you will let me have your "cheque for the amount now, so that I can close up the account and have done with it. I need the money and must "have it."

"Well, Mr. Covet Grab, if you could allow the matter to "stand for a few weeks longer I would try and arrange the "matter—I think."

"No, sir, I cannot let the matter stand even a day longer. "When I was here the other day—some weeks ago—I said "that I needed the money, and that I could not let the matter remain unsettled, and you then said you would try and "arrange it. Now, I don't want to foreclose this mortgage, "and I would prefer that you pay me the money. This place "is not worth to me the amount of my debt, and if I had it

"on my hands I might have hard work to realize my debt
"out of it."

"Why, surely you would not take away this lovely place
"from us—our home—would you?" said the Laird.

"Not if you pay me the money you owe—but 'business is
"business'—as the saying is," answered the irascible
usurer.

"You have surely some heart in you, Mr. Covet Grab,"
continued the anxious Laird. "This is the only place you
"have left to us out of all the broad acres we once owned.
"Little by little you have taken our possessions from us.
"Field after field has gone—forest after forest! All you
"have left us is this dear old manor house and an acre of
"garden and an acre of woodland—two acres only left out of
"how many, Mr. Covet Grab?"

"I have not made much profit out of the transaction any-
"way," answered the usurer. "I would far rather you had
"paid me the money. I did not want to take the land."

"Where will we go if you take this last portion of the
"estate?" continued the poor Laird.

"That is none of my affair, of course! 'Business is busi-
"ness,' says I. Pay me the money and keep the land."

"Hadn't you better be counting out the money, Laird?
"We are losing time."

The Laird only could stare blandly before him. Through
the open door leading out on the verandah he could see the
beautiful garden, the pride of the whole family, and away at
the further end he could see the bent form of "Old John" as
he bent over the much-prized strawberry beds. What would
"Old John" say when he heard the sad news?

In the distance he could see the blue hills, some of which,
at one time, were part of the estate. What merry "tramps"
he and "the girls," attended by their faithful servitor, had
often had to "the hills." Gathering the earliest "May Flow-
ers" in the spring, the beautiful ferns in the later summer,
and in the golden Fall the beautiful pictured maple leaves.
And he thought of the fun they had had together following
the windings of some mountain stream as it rippled over the
stones and gravel and eddied around the logs and trees

which here and there impeded its course. He and "the girls" knew well the course of each of the little streams which wended their way through yon blue hills—they knew where all the "pools" could be found and in which the wily trout lurked waiting for their prey. Many a fine trout had the gay party brought home in triumph as the result of their merry fishing excursions. Oh, their lives had been so happy—so joyous! What a hard-hearted man this must be who would wish to destroy all this happiness and wreck their lives!

The Laird remained so long staring blankly into the distance that his harsh creditor grew impatient and burst in on his debtor's sad musing rather abruptly with the remark:

"You surely have had long enough time in the past to think "the whole thing over. All I want is my money. Please "let me know, one way or the other, what you are going to "do in the matter."

Then sadly the Laird rose up from his seat and, facing his tormentor, said slowly and in a tone of deep distress: "There is nothing else I can say except to tell you that I "have not the money now. If you wait for a few weeks, I "hope in some way I can straighten the matter out."

"I cannot wait another day; in fact, not another hour," replied the harsh creditor as he rose to go.

He proceeded as far as the door, and then before opening it he turned to the Laird, who had resumed his seat and was again looking blankly out on the distant outline of the blue hills; and coming back a few steps into the room, said: "I "will, however, make you one offer: I am rather afraid it "may surprise you somewhat, but I cannot help that: if you "will give me your daughter Elfie in marriage, I will forgive "the debt."

The Laird jumped from his seat in sudden astonishment. When the old man had started to speak he was still looking blankly before him, and he hardly heard his opening words, but the latter portion fairly electrified him, so to speak. He jumped so suddenly from his seat that the old man retreated towards the door and placed one hand on the knob, as if he were afraid his creditor intended doing him bodily violence.

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But on looking into the face of the Laird he could not see any trace of anger or resentment—only wonder, surprise and bewilderment.

"You look startled, Mr. Summertrees," said the creditor.

"Startled, my dear sir; startled! I am not sure that I heard you aright. Will you please repeat what you said?"

"I simply said, Laird, that if you will give me your fair daughter Elfie in marriage I will forgive the debt."

"My daughter! Elfie! In marriage to you!"

"Yes. Why not?"

"Why not? Why, man, a thousand reasons!" answered the astonished Laird.

"You need not bother telling me the whole thousand reasons; two or three will do me for the present."

"The matter is too absurd to talk about seriously, sir. I refuse to discuss it."

"All right, Mr. Summertrees; just as you say. You can do as you like. You can keep your daughter and I will take this little property. I don't know that I can make any money out of it, but I will do my best. After you have forever lost your home you will have time to regret your refusal to discuss a proposition which means happiness and comfort to all concerned."

"Happiness and comfort to all concerned!" wonderfully repeated the bewildered Laird.

"Yes, happiness and comfort. If your fair daughter becomes my wife she will have got a good husband, although I say it myself. And this old homestead will remain in the family. We will all live here."

"We will all live here," repeated the startled Laird. "You?"

"Why, yes; me. Why not? Would I not be your son-in-law?"

"My 'son-in-law?'" repeated the bewildered Laird.

"You look and talk as if I were some monster or ape who were proposing for the hand of your fair daughter!"

"Monster or ape, who was proposing for the hand of 'your fair daughter,'" repeated the astonished Laird.

"Now sit down like a sensible man and a prudent, sensible father and let us discuss the matter."

As the father neither sat down nor asked him to be seated, the old man continued standing whilst he thus proceeded: "Why should the idea startle you so much? Is not the match in every way a suitable one? Am I not a suitable husband for any girl? Girls like wealthy husbands. I am wealthy. And then, Laird, does it not occur to you that you would in this way not only be keeping this old Homestead in the family, but you would be bringing back into the family all the many acres which at one time you owned, "but which now I own?"

Not receiving any reply, the inexorable creditor proceeded: "As you still look so startled, I'll tell you what I'll do: "I'll leave the matter until this day week. In one week from to-day I will come back for your answer. In the meantime you can see your fair daughter and have the whole matter arranged. That will give you ample time to make up your mind." And he started again for the door. But on his way he was in his turn startled to hear from the lips of his debtor these words:

"You need not wait for your answer; you need not come back for an answer. Do you think I would sell my daughter? My answer is 'No! a thousand times No!' I would not even distress my daughter by mentioning such a matter to her. Go your way, you harsh, cruel, relentless persecutor! You can do your worst! You can take this fine old Homestead. We will seek another Home. Better a thousand times the most abject poverty than to listen to your vile proposal!"

The Laird stood erect and delivered this reply with such a firm, determined voice and with such flashing eyes that the old man got again to the door and prepared to take a hasty departure, saying as he opened the door: "Very well. I'll give you a week to think it over calmly and coolly. I will be back in one week from to-day."

As he opened the door and walked out he nearly fell over "Old John," who was coming along the passage on some errand to the Laird. The old usurer was never good-tem-

pered; his temper, like that of Mr. Justice Stareleigh, always "bordered on the irritable and brooked not contradiction."* And just now he felt even more irritable than usual, so he returned the "I beg your pardon, sir. I did not know you were there" of "Old John" with a scowl and the harsh words: "You old villain, when I am master here I will not "have such lazy, good-for-nothing, clumsy wretches as you "lying around doing nothing."

To this reply "Old John" suavely answered: "Mr. Covet "Grab, it never pays any one to lose his temper. I apologized "for running against you or allowing you to run against me, "whichever it was. As to your being master here, I hope "that will never be. If you ever were master, you may be "sure I would not wish to be your servant. And as to my "being a villain, as you just called me, if I heard rightly, a "villain" is a man who wrongs somebody. I have not wronged any one."

Not deigning to answer "Old John," and, in fact, pretending not to have heard him, the old usurer went his way down the long passage and out of the front door.

"Old John" knocked softly at his master's door two or three times, and not receiving any reply, he made bold to open the door and looked in the room to see whether the Laird was there.

To his surprise he saw his master sitting at the table with his head buried in his hands. He coughed once or twice to attract his attention, and not receiving any notice from his master he said aloud: "Laird, I came to ask you—"

His master then raised his head from the table, and, to his great sorrow, the faithful old servant saw tears in the Laird's eyes.

"O master, what is the matter?" said old John, going quickly up to his master and affectionately placing one of his rough, toil-hardened hands on the hand of his master.

Then he continued speaking partly to the Laird and partly to himself: "That old miser who called me a 'villain' has "had something to do with this trouble, I fancy."

"Are you referring to Mr. Covet Grab?" asked the Laird.

*"The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club"—Charles Dickens.

"Yes, master," said old John.

"Well," said the Laird, "if you will sit here I will tell you the cause of my sorrow. In fact, I had made up my mind that it was my duty to lay the whole matter before you, John; and if you had not come in just now I was going to find you and tell you my sorrow. And then I was going to ask you to talk the whole matter over with me and try and help me to come to a conclusion. Or rather, John, perhaps I should say that I was going to tell you of the conclusion to which I had already come and to ask your opinion as to it. I will, of course, also want your valuable assistance in helping me to carry out my plans. In fact, "John," and here the Laird, who had already risen from his seat, placed his hand on the old man's shoulder, "I could not commence even—as one might say—to carry out my plans without your help. But yet, my good friend, I do not know whether I should ask you to help us, seeing we are in such trouble. Probably it is my first duty again to urge you—as I used to urge you in days long gone by, and when our troubles first commenced to loom up in the distance, as it were, to leave the sinking ship and to take service under brighter skies, where—"

"Oh, master, stop! stop! Please do not say anything more like that! You know it is impossible. How could I leave you and 'the Bonnie Leddies'?"

The faithful old servant looked so distressed that the master could not say anything more with reference to a subject the mere mention of which clearly seemed to give so much pain.

Then old John smiled and said: "Of course, master, if you and 'the bonnie ledgies' wish me to leave your service 'I will do so.'

And when, in reply, the Laird smiled, old John broke into a jolly, hearty laugh, and brought down his clenched hand on the table with a bang, saying: "A fig for the old miser! What do we care for him? Let him go his way! He called me a 'villain,' but I told him 'a *villain* is a man who wrongs somebody. I have not wronged any one!'"

"Rightly spoken, my trusty friend," said the Laird. "It

"was about that same old usurer—I was about to say 'villain,' but I will not—I will not judge him harshly—"that I was about to speak to you. And then when we've had "our little chat and had come to a conclusion ourselves I was "going to call in 'the girls' and talk the whole matter over "with them."

"Ah! you were! were you?" came from the lips of the two "bonnie leddies," and, turning quickly, the two men saw the two pretty girls standing arm in arm near the library door.

"Why, when did you come in, my dears?" exclaimed the Laird.

"Oh, only two or three minutes ago," said Elfie. "I told "you I would hurry back and bring Retta with me. We "came to the library door and heard you and 'Old John' "talking very earnestly. In fact, father, when our dear old "friend," and here she looked so kindly at the old man that he went over to her and took her little hand tenderly in his great rough hand, "came into the room he must have left "the door half open, and although we do not want to be "‘cowans’ or ‘eavesdroppers’ we could not help hearing a "good deal which perhaps you did not intend we should hear "until later on.

"But, father," she continued—and here both girls went over to the Laird and put their arms around him—"why "should we not be made fully acquainted with any trouble "which may have come to you? In fact, you know, don't "you now? that you have no right or business to have any "trouble unless we share it. What are we here for, I would "like to know, sir, if we are not to share in your troubles as "well as your joys? You are a nice man, you are, don't you "think so? to have a little trouble on your mind and not wish "to share it with your comrades. Just wait until you ask us "to go trout fishing with you again!" And here both girls laughed merrily and their silvery laughter seemed so contagious that both of the men joined in it. Old John stood where the girls had left him looking admiringly at them and murmuring to himself, "the bonnie leddies."

"Well," said the Laird, "perhaps I should say that the

"present trouble is not 'a little trouble' as you called it—it is really a big one."

"One would think so," said Retta, "from the eloquent way in which 'Old John' brought down his fist on the table a few minutes ago!"

"Perhaps he thought he was bringing it down on some 'villain'!" said her companion. And then both girls laughed heartily again, and again the men joined in the laughter.

"Well, my dears," continued the Laird, "I was about to explain to Old John when you came in"—

"the nature of the great trouble which has been overshadowing Summertrees like a black thunder cloud, for a long time "and which has at last burst on us—and threatens our ruin."

"O you know it is not as bad as that," said Elfie. "You know thunder storms generally soon blow over—and I am willing to assure you—and I know Retta will join cheerfully in the assurance—that very soon this thunder cloud will have harmlessly blown over the House of Summertrees—and that none of us will be at all wet; not a drop of rain shall fall, father. What do you say, Old John?"

"I say again," said the old man, "a fig for the old miser! What do we care for him?"

Then Retta added solemnly, and kind of sotto voce like, "I don't know that I would give him a fig: I don't know that he particularly deserves such a luxury. Besides he might object on the ground of the expense involved." and then, of course, everyone laughed.

"I must say," pursued the Laird, "that from the moment Old John came into the room until now the sky has been brightening until now the cloud seems either to have gone away altogether or to have become very small."

"At any rate, father," said Elfie softly, "it seems now to have 'a silver lining,'—as some one once beautifully wrote —does it not?"

"Well, dears, before John came in, our pathway looked very dark indeed and I had almost given up hope. The stormcloud looked very black indeed. The 'trail' seemed entirely blocked—so to speak. But John in his own hearty way soon commenced to make me have hope again. And

"then when his 'bonnie leddies' came in they filled the room "with so much silvery light and sweetness that the storm "cloud commenced to melt away—or rather as you, Elfie, so "beautifully said—it commenced to take on a 'silver lining'."

"What a gallant old cavalier the Laird of Summertrees is "getting to be!" said Retta.

"Rather should you say," remarked her companion, "what "a gallant 'Squire of Dames' the Laird of Summertrees al- "ways was."

Then Old John said: "You will pardon me, my bonnie "leddies, but had you not better let the master tell us the "cause of his trouble?"

"Why yes, of course," said Elfie. "Thank you, John, that "is, of course, what we wish to hear."

And the mischievous Retta added, in a 'loud aside'—*sotto voce* as it were—Old John is always so very *practical*, you "know."

"Well," continued the Laird—"one cannot help smiling—"you girls are so gay—but the subject is a very serious one—"or rather it seemed so serious this morning that at the "time Old John came in it weighed pretty heavily on me: "We have to leave Summertrees—and at once."

"Leave Summertrees—and at once!" repeated the bewildered trio.

"I knew it would surprise you all"—continued the Laird—"and if it had been possible I would have kept this great "trouble to myself. But you see it could not be."

"My dear darling father!" said Elfie, as she put her arms round his neck and kissed him.

"My dear darling uncle," said Retta, as she also kissed him.

"A fig for the old miser! What do we care for him?" again said Old John, and by way of making a little diversion, he again brought down his fist on the table.

"But," pursued the Laird, "we have to go—Mr. Covet "Grab says—"

"A fig for the old miser! What do we care for him?" again ejaculated Old John and again his fist came down on the table.

Just at this moment the attention of all was called to the sound of heavy footsteps coming along the passage: the footsteps sounded like the footsteps of those who carry a heavy burden—and before the astonished quartette in the library had time to resume their conversation they heard a jolly voice sing to a rollicking air:

"I've ribbons and laces,
"To set off the faces,
"Of pretty young sweethearts and wives."*

—and—first thing they knew—two sun-burned pedlars had walked through the open door into the Library, and, in fact, right up to the place where the quartette were standing, bearing between them a heavypedlar's pack, and solemnly putting down the pack on the floor they commenced to sing, one in a beautiful soprano-pianissimo sort of voice, as it were, and the other in a deep alto-baritone-basso-profundocantralto sort of voice—so to speak.

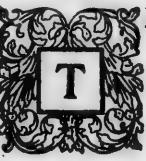
"I've ribbons and laces,
"To set off the faces,
"Of pretty young sweethearts and wives."*

Act II.

THE GALLANTRY OF A KING.

SCENE: The Land of the Grimalkins.

TEMPORE: King William the Fourth, of England, and King Grimalkin the First, of the Land of the Grimalkins.

HE Land was in a prosperous condition. The crops had never been better—every year the tea and tobacco grown in the new District of Pussandra seemed to give better satisfaction, both to grower, seller and consumer: even the flavour of each seemed to be improving—so the ladies said with respect to the tea and so the gentlemen said with respect to the tobacco. The sheep ranchers in the Blue Mountains—known also as the Backbone Mountains—were doing well and were rapidly getting well-off.

The yeomen who were engaged in general farming on the low lands were happy and prosperous.

The newly discovered iron mines and copper mines in the mountains back of Catburg were turning out well.

The several manufacturing industries throughout the Land were prospering—so the newspapers said. Already Catburg gave promise of speedily becoming a great manufacturing center. Pussyburg also had aspirations in the same way. Each of those towns boasted one or more woolen mills which already were doing a thriving business, and as the number of sheep kept in the Blue Mountains was steadily increasing, it seemed very probable that within a short time the woolen industry would have reached great proportions. Even Mieauburg now had one large woolen mill and another was in course of construction.

The merchants throughout the country were prosperous—so the Bankers said, and they ought to know.

The three towns of Mieauburg, Catburg and Pussyburg were growing apace and their citizens when writing to one another used sometimes to write the word "City" on their envelopes.

Notice had already been given in the Official Gazette—"The Royal Grimalkin Gazette"—that at the very next sitting of Parliament application would be made on behalf of the Ratepayers of the Town of Catburg for an Act of Parliament conferring upon the Town the rights and privileges of a City—including the right to His Worship the Mayor of wearing on State occasions a robe of office and a gold chain. And it was likely that within the next two or three years Mieauburg and Pussyburg would "follow suit."

Little villages and "settlements" were springing up all over the country. First of all as the country got settled up you would see a postoffice started, and next thing you knew the Postmaster or Postmistress, as the case might be, wou'd open a little store—and then some one would start a blacksmith shop right opposite the office. Next thing you knew one of the MacFlannery girls would open up a modest little dressmaking and millinery establishment next door to the postoffice, and you would see the pretty little sign hanging over the door, "Mlle. MacFlannery, Modiste et cetera."

And inside the window would appear a neat little card bearing this legend: "Apprentices wanted to learn the Profession; no Flirting allowed on the premises."

But if you were to stroll down "the street"—casually, as it were—you would sometimes—nay, perhaps frequently—see the new "Apprentice," Mlle. MacFlannigan, standing or sitting near the window of the little shop and smiling very sweetly at some one across the street—and, looking that way, you would see young MacPhairsonn, the blacksmith's apprentice, standing at the smithy door begirt with a leathern apron and with his shirt sleeves rolled up and with several black marks on his manly face—a smiling across the street at somebody or other, and it is a strange coincidence that his eyes should always seem to be looking right over at the Fashionable Emporium of La Modiste.

Trade on the classic Cattawaul was "rapidly looking up"—so the newspapers said and so the tug men said and the men who owned the "stone hookers."

Nearly wherever you went along the River—at any

rate between Mieauburg on the north and Pussyburg on the south—you would be likely to hear either the shrill tooting of a tug or its “puff”—“puff”—“puff”—“pug”—“pug”—“pug”: they were all what were called “high pressure” affairs in those days, and they always went along the River—up and down—a-grunting and a-puffing and a-pugging—just for all the world like a big over-grown Pug dog.

You know the *genus* or species of “Bow wow” denominated “Pug” seems to have two leading characteristics or idiosyncracies: first—they generally seem to wear their tongues outside of their mouths and to one side, and second—they seem to grunt all the time and seem to be able to do nothing without grunting.

The “stone hookers” seemed to be doing a lively trade: they did not entirely confine themselves to the hauling of stone. They would haul lime, sand, lumber, lath, railway ties, even potatoes and turnips—or even—on a pinch—as one might say—household furniture. Sometimes they would sail up or down the River—if they had a “fair wind” or even a strong “beam wind”—but generally the wind seemed a “head wind” and the poor “stone hooker” had to follow humbly in the wake of one of the a-grunting and a-pugging tugs to which I have referred.

The “stone hooker” looked far more poetical when it was a-sailing “on its own hook”—so to speak. Generally it affected red sails—and the outspread sails—especially if they were set “wing and wing”—made as pretty a picture as you would wish to see. Of course the picture took in and included other things besides the outstretched sails of the “stone hooker”: the blue sky overhead—perhaps here and there a fleecy cloud: the blue waters of the classic Cattawau: the green banks of the River: the dim blue outline of the Backbone Mountains to the east.

The brisk trade on the River had the effect of causing several busy little “settlements” or villages to grow up along the shore and on either side of the River.

The evolution was very simple: first some enterprising farmer living in the vicinity would build a little dock or wharf and would load it up with “cord wood” brought from

his farm and cut (I mean the *wood* and not the *farm*) into four-foot lengths. Then he would put up a big sign board on the dock or wharf bearing this interesting legend: "Ici "on parle Sanscrit—and sells cord-wood to Tugs: no smoking allowed on the premises."

First thing you know, comes a little tug a-snorting and a-pugging on its way up the River, and the gallant Captaine sees the new dock or wharf and the new sign-board, and he says to his first-mate—says he: "Bill, 'ere's a new outfit of "stove wood—shall we try it?"

"Wa'al, Skipper—I'll ask the First Engineer."

Then that functionary is consulted, and, in his turn, he consults the First Fireman—and it being ascertained that the tug needs a little more wood if it is to keep up its snorting and pugging to perfection all the way to the next Landing. So the gallant Skipper is advised of the circumstance and he takes his speaking trumpet in his hand and hails the gallant Captaine of the Stone Hooker "Eliza Jane" thusly:

"Eliza Jane! Ahoy! Ahoy!"

Then the Skipper of the "Eliza Jane" takes his trumpet in his hand and answers back: "Yes! Fire Fly! Ahoy! Ahoy!"

Then says—through his trumpet—the Skipper of the Tug to the Skipper of the Stone Hooker: "Cap'n—I'm a goin' "to lay in some cord wood at this new dock on the starboard "side if you are 'greeable."

"Sartainly, Cap'n," calls back the Skipper of the "Eliza Jane." Then he tells his first-mate to put the helm to port and he goes for'a'd to watch proceedings.

Well, the wood being good and the price reasonable, a thriving trade is done—and the dock or wharf has to be enlarged, and tugs and "hookers" commence to make a "lounging place" of the dock or wharf—as it were—and, first thing you know, appears another sign board bearing this interesting legend: "Any Tug or Hooker found loafing "on dese yere premises will be charged Five hundred Yen "an hour after the first hour. By order (Signed) John "Tomlinson, Sen'r, Wharfinger."

Soon some one starts a store—then the Government is

petitioned to make the storekeeper both a Postmaster and a "J. p." and both requests are granted. Then you may see as you pass up and down the River, the new sign-board with the mysterious legend: "John O'Lennan, Ici est le Poste "Restante et Gustus de la Piece."

Then comes a fair modiste and a brawny blacksmith, and in course of time also comes a tinsmith and a carpenter and waggon maker. And so, gradually, "Tomlinson's Landing" becomes a thriving "Settlement" and eventually an incorporated Village with a Reeve and a Village Council, and a Village Policeman in a blue coat and gold or gold-appearing buttons, and a Village Clerk and Village Treasurer, and Village Tax Collector, and all the other officials and paraphernalia which a duly incorporated village by rights ought to have. Of course Mr. John Tomlinson, Sen'r, is the first Reeve.

It was in or by a somewhat similar course of evolution that the now busy Village of Purrville Landing took its rise.

Some wise-acres said that when the new railway—"Le Grand Sud-Chemin de fer"—was completed and running as far as Pussyburg the busy times on the classic Cattawaul would cease, and that the produce, and supplies, and freight of all kinds which now was carried up and down the River on "flat boats" and "scows" and "stone hookers" would go through by rail; in other words, that the snorting "iron horse" and noisy "freight car" would supplant the equally snorting tug and the graceful "flat boat," "scow" and "hooker."

But this was only the pessimistic utterance of some "wise-acres."

"Le Grand Sud" was in active course of construction; it was being built in sections all the way from Mieauburg to Pussyburg. Hundreds of men were busily engaged in its construction, and, thus far at all events, its construction had been a benefit instead of a damage to the owners of tugs and flat boats and scows and "hookers"; they were kept busy hauling railway ties and bridge timber and building stone required at different points in the construction of the Railway. At Catburg and Pussyburg the line was to touch the

River bank and at no place was it to run a great way back from the shore.

Another Railway Company had lately been chartered—"Le Grand Occident—Aliemni de Fer." It was to start at Catburg and run west into the already-famous District of Pussandra. But as yet this last line only existed "on paper," although survey parties were out running "trial lines" and trying to decide on the easiest and most practicable route.

The citizens of Catburg commenced to walk very straight and to feel their importance as citizens of a city which one of these days was going to be a great Railway Junction—a great railroad Center.

Mieauburg would, of course, also be a *Terminus* but not a *Junction*. It was not every place which could be a *Junction*, you see.

Such was the state of affairs in the Land at the time of the occurrence of the pathetic incidents recorded in this narrative.

Parliament was in session at the Capital—Mieauburg. The Legislators were meeting for the first time in the new Parliament Buildings which had recently been erected on "the Big Square." The citizens were proud of "the stately pine" and they thronged the galleries, the lobbies and the corridors. The Speaker's Gallery was reserved exclusively for the "fair sex," and all through the busy Session that particular spot was "a veritable garden of beautiful flowers."

It was the Honorable Brer Featherstone Johnsing, the Leader of His Majesty's "Loyal Opposition" in the House of Commons, who thus poetically described the Speaker's Gallery. He, of course, was the Leader of the "Outs"—"the Bleus"—and his political opponents used to say that the Hon. gentleman would say anything or do anything which was likely to influence a vote. Of course this remark must be understood as having been made "strictly in a Pickwickian sense."

Political feeling ran high in The Land of the Grimalkins. In the very early Pioneer Days people did not have time to bother with politics. When a man's thoughts have to run largely, if not entirely, on the felling of trees, the cutting and

"skidding" of logs, the hauling of 'em to market, the "logging up" and "burning," the rushing in of a late crop of potatoes or of turnips, or maybe of millet, the hasty building of a hewed log house for himself and his family, and a barn and stable and chicken house, he has not much time to consider whether or not he particularly cares which of the two great Political Parties are in power at Mieauburg—"the Bleus" or "the Mauves." If you meet him wearing a thoughtful expression and "gazing pensively into space," you need not jump to the conclusion that he is considering any of "the burning political questions of the day"—it would be safer to assume that he is wondering whether or not the season will be dry enough to permit him early in the season to get "a good burn" on that four-acre piece west of the pasture field which he chopped last winter. It will be a matter to be regretted if he cannot get his "burn" early enough in the summer to enable him to get in a late crop of potatoes—at all events a crop of turnips or of millet.

And his faithful wife—the true "help meet" of the hardy "pioneer"—she is too busy with her multifarious household concerns to consider which of the two colours—bleu or mauve—she prefers. If she has any extra time for thought it must perchance go to the pretty young calves and the gentle lambs and the baby chickens, gozlings and turklings or gobblings—whichever is the right expression. If you were to ask this simple-minded "Queen of the Household" which colour she would prefer in a ribbon or a dress or a "spring bonnet"—if she could afford one—she probably would tell you that she—as far as she herself was concerned—preferred bleu to mauve, or mauve to bleu—as the case might be.

But of late years—and as the country became better settled—and as the farmers became prosperous and in many cases "well-off"—things became changed in this respect. When a farmer gets so that he need not worry about his "burn"—when the dear old log house is no longer the "homestead" and dwelling house but is used as a store house or stable—or perhaps as the woodshed and summer kitchen—when in its place there stands a larger and more pre-

tentious structure built of lumber and called "frame"—or perchance of stone or brick:

When the old-time log barn has given place to an imposing frame structure, with a huge high stone foundation within which the live stock find comfortable quarters during the cold winter:

When the farmer's buxom wife and his pretty daughters are able to take a lively interest in the subject of ribbons and laces—when these fair Queens and Princesses of the Household receive frequently by mail the interesting and pleasing "Catalogues" issued periodically by the great Emporiums of Art and Fashion situate in the thriving towns of Mieauburg, Catburg and Pussyburg:

When "La Modiste" may be found not only in the larger towns and embryo cities but also in the villages and thriving "settlements":

When the "honest yeoman" on state occasions or when he sits on a Grand Jury can afford to wear a "silk hat":

When some of the country boys are going to "Bizness Collidges" in the larger towns:

When "the Schoolmaster is abroad in the land":

When the melodious melodeon and the harmonious harmonium have given way in many a farm house and many a shepherd's ranch to the pianissimo piano forte:

Surely the time has come when "the honest yeomanry of the country—the back-bone of The Fair Land of the Grimalkins"—as the Premier once said on "the husting,"—should commence to take an active interest in "the burning political questions of the day."

And they did burn—the same "political questions."

The whole country seemed divided into two great hostile political "camps."

Sensible men who had lived alongside of one another on the same "Section Line," or "Concession Line," or "Side Line," or "Colonization Line," as the case might be, for years and years, and who had always been good friends, suddenly seemed to wake up to the realization that there

was something wrong somewhere or other or somehow or other.

Farmer Bronson would say of Farmer Jinnison—"he is a good farmer—and understands the soil and the crops—"and he is a first-class neighbor—it is too bad he is 'mauve.' "

And "old ma'am Jinnison" would say of "old ma'am Bronson: "I really am sorry 'Sis Bronson' is so 'bleu.' " "Tis too bad, because she really is a good neighbor."

And every four years the whole country would be thrown into a "ferment." "The Elections" would be "on"—and people seemed to be "a *little off*"—as the saying is. It was bad enough to have the whole country thrown into a turmoil every four years—but the politicians were not content with that: they brought on what they were pleased to call "Bye Elections" on every occasion possible. And for weeks before the day of the Election—whether it was a "General" or a "Bye"—the whole Land was practically turned upside down. You heard nothing but "Politics" no matter where you went. Even the newsboys on the streets in the large towns discussed politics on the street between themselves—and little Shaver Johnnie would say to little Shaver Billie—speaking of little Shaver Tommy: "I really am afraid he is a little 'mauve' in his sentiments." The "stump speaker" was "abroad in the land" and every night or two there would be a "Political Meeting" in "the little Red School House" on the Concession Line. If you drove along the Colonization Roads or even along any of the Side Lines, you could not help seeing the notices posted upon the fences and even sometimes on the trees along the Road. And when you got down out of your buggy and walkd over to the notice and commenced to read it you found it read:

"Public Notice.

"Brer Llewellyn MacFairson, who has received the unanimous support of the recent

"Mauve Convention

"held at Tomlinson's Landing, will
"Adress

"the honest yeomanry of the Electoral Riding
"of Catalinha at

"*'The Little Red School House,'*

"corner of the A Line and the Fourth Side
"Road, on Thursday Evening, the 20th in-
"stant, at eight p. m.

"Reserved Seats for the Fair Ones.

"Come one! Come all!

"We're in and will stay in!"

By order,

BRER WILKINS HOBSON,
Sec. Mauve Assoc'n Electl.
Dist. of Catalinha.

☒ "Please come and hear 'the burning Po-
"litical questions of the Day' fully, fairly and
"impartially discussed."

It goes without saying that the notice would be printed on mauve-colored paper.

Perhaps on the very next tree you would find a Bleu proclamations almost similarly worded and printed, of course, on bleu paper.

The *Bleu* proclamation would, of course, differ with the *Mauve* proclamation in certain important respects: "*mutatis mutandis*," as learned forces would say. The speaker of the evening would be Brer Silbertson O'Finlayson; and he had apparently "received the unanimous support of the recent "Bleu Convention held at Tomlinson's Landing"; and the motto or Party Cry would, of course, be the war cry of the Bleu Faction—"Let 'em say who Pay!" and the notice would be signed by "Brer Francois Mowling, Sec'y Bleu Ass'n Electl. Dist. of Catalinha."

For weeks before the Election came off and for a long time afterwards, most of the newspapers were "off colour"—so to speak—and in more ways than one: they were printed either on blue or mauve paper—as the case might be—instead of being printed on white paper as would be the

case in sensible times—and it was often hard to make out the words. You see black letters on a blue ground are not so easily made out as they would be if printed on white paper. Perhaps black showed plainer on mauve than on blue—but I am not so sure even as to that.

And then during Election time most of the newspapers would be filled with trash—I really cannot help calling it “trash”—about “politics”—and the motto or party cry or “war cry” of the party to which the newspaper gave its allegiance would so frequently appear in the columns of the paper that it would make a sensible man feel very tired and weary like.

In fact, some people who did not care about “politics” nor as to whether the “ins” got “out” or the “outs” got “in,” did not take any newspaper at all during election times.

Well, at this particular time there was no election exactly on—but according to some of the Bleu newspapers it was likely that the Land would be in the throes of a General Election within the next few weeks. As “The Purville Weekly Hesitater” had remarked—of course speaking “strictly in a Pickwickian sense”—“The people of the great “Land of the Grimalkins cannot much longer stand the “jobbery, the tom-foolery and the arrant humbug of the “Mauve so-called Government. What this country wants “and what it will have—what it *must* have—is honest Gov-“ernment—and ‘Government by the people and for the “‘people.’ The Mauve farce of a Government has been “played long enough. The people have stood all they could “stand and it only remained for ‘the

“‘Kettlekittle Bridge Job’

“to break ‘the camel’s back’; this piece of political nepotism, “arrant humbug and horrible jobbery is indeed ‘the last “‘straw which breaks the camel’s back.’ The Hon. Brer “Heavyweight Holdentight may think he can continue to “hoodwink a free and enlightened people. But he cannot. “We demand that he ‘go to the country’ on ‘the Kettlekittle “‘Bridge Job’ and see what the electorate say.

“‘LET ‘EM SAY WHO PAY!’”

Yes, the people of the Land were so prosperous that they actually seemed to have time to waste over what was a veritable "Tempest in a Tea-Pot"—as the saying is.

The Bleu newspapers had, during the last few weeks, often contained in big staring Head lines the startling words:

"The Kettlekettle Bridge Job!
"Infamous Nepotism!"

And now that Parliament was sitting the matter was made the leading subject of forensic discussion—as it were.

How the "tempest in a tea-pot" did rage, to be sure!

And it burst forth at the very opening of the Session.

The Speech from the Throne was very short and meagre indeed—"a pretty slim Bill of Fare indeed," as the Bleu member for South Pussandra had said. And in his patriotic indignation he had added:

"Mr. Speaker—such a slim Bill of Fare is an insult to the "intelligence and the patriotism of the honest electorate of "this Fair Land." (Cheers from the opposition side of the House.) "Do the gentlemen of Mauve sentiments think "they can thus 'play fast and loose' with the honest electors "—the hardy-handed sons of toil—the sturdy yeomanry of "the Land of the Grimalkins?" (Loud cheers from the opposition benches.)

Then feeling and knowing that every word he said was being taken down in shorthand and would not only appear in the next morning's Bleu newspapers but would also be printed in the Election Pamphlets—"the Campaign Literature"—for use in the next Election—the eloquent tobacco-grower from South Pussandra thus proceeded:

"Does the so-called Mauve Government think"—

Here the Bleu speaker was "called to order" by the Speaker, and after one hour and twenty minutes had been spent in "wrangling" between the two sides of the House, the Speaker finally gave his decision that the words "so-called" as applied to a Party "in Power" and having the "confidence of the People" were awfully "unparliamentary" could not possibly be tolerated.

"I bow to your decision, Mr. Speaker," said the Bleu

member for South Pussandra, "and I withdraw the words "objected to. The reasons you, sir, have given seem clear "and logical—the Mauve gentlemen are certainly 'in power' "now, and, speaking strictly and formally, they may, in a "limited sense, be said to have 'the confidence of the People,' "but—but—there's an old saying, 'it's a long lane which has "no turn'—and the next few weeks may see a great 'turn'." (Loud opposition cheers and a cry 'why did you not say 'a great turn-over'?)

"It is a strange thing, Mr. Speaker," continued the Hon. gentleman, putting his "arms a-kimbo"—as the saying is—and gazing pensively at the Speaker—"that the little Speech "from the Throne contained no reference—not even the "slightest reference—to the great subject which for weeks "has been agitating the minds of the people of this Fair "Land." (Loud opposition cheers.) "I refer to what is "known far and wide as

" 'The Kettlekettle Bridge Job!'"
(Tumultuous opposition applause.)

"Now, as far as I can see, Mr. Speaker," continued the Bleu member for South Pussandra—this time folding his arms squarely across his breast and staring so fixedly at the poor Speaker that he actually stared him "out of countenance"—as the saying is—"the much-vaunted Speech from "the Throne—despite all the kind things said concerning it "by the Mauve mover and the Mauve seconder of the Ad-dress—contains practically nothing at all. (Loud cheers from the Bleu members.)

"Now let us scrutinize it a bit—let us look at it a bit "closely: what does it contain?" (Here the Hon. gentleman takes up the printed "Speech from the Throne" which lies on the little table before him—squints at it awfully—and then proceeds.) "Nothing more, in effect than this: 'Hon. "Sieurs of the Upper House: Hon. Gentlemen of the Lower "House: I am glad to be able to congratulate you on the "following facts: the new iron and copper mines back of the "embryo City of Catburg are turning out well—the tobacco "and tea crops promise well—the spring calves are getting

"along very well—so are the sheep and the spring lambs—
"and the geese and the chickens and the ducks and the
"turkeys—and it is generally believed that the crop of wool
"this year will be above the average." (Loud laughter
from both sides of the House, and repeated cheers from the
opposition side.) "Oh, I forgot—I must do it justice—the
"speech does include these words: 'I am glad to know the
"new railway—"Le Grand Sud—Chemine de fer"—is well
"under way and it is hoped through trains will be running
"between Mieauburg and Pussyburg by the Fall. Another
"great Trunk Line—"Le Grand Occident—Chemine de
"fer"—is seeking incorporation at your hands this present
"Session of Parliament. These are—Hon. Sieurs of the
"Upper House and Hon. Commoners—surely signs of great
"progress and advancement." (Loud cheers from the
Government side.)

"Now, sir," continued the Bleu member for South Pus-sandra—a-gazing solemnly and dejectedly at "Mr. Speaker"—"I would like to ask you, sir, if you can find a single word
"in this whole Speech from the Throne which refers—even
"indirectly, sir—to the great subject which is now agitating
"the minds of so many of His Majesty's liege subjects. I
"refer to

"The Kettlekittle Bridge Job."
(Tremendous opposition cheering.)

"Not a word, sir, not a word."

"Now, sir," continued the wound-up member for Pus-sandra South—and again placing his arms "a-kimbo"—and again staring the poor Speaker out of countenance: "I
"lately held in my hand a great 'Organ of Public Opinion'—
"as the saying is—a 'live newspaper'—as the saying is—pub-
"lished in the center of a rich farming community. I refer,
"sir, to 'The Weekly Purrville Hesitater.' (Loud cheers
from the Bleu members.) "I said 'I lately held in my hand,'
"but, sir, I will now speak in the present tense and not in
"the past, and I will read to you, with your permission, ex-
"actly what that able and representative and influential
"journal has recently said, in the course of an able and

"thoughtful editorial, on that great and burning question of "the day."

And then, amidst tumultuous cheers from the opposition members, the member for Pussandra South, read the Editorial Remarks which I have lately given to the reader of these pages. He then continued:

"What does the word 'nepotism' mean? I see the word "appears in big, staring Headlines. It must mean something."

Then he added solemnly:

"I will tell you, sir, what it means. The word 'nepotism' "is a word lately imported from the classic Hindooostanie "into our own classic Sanscrit. It has, sir, so to speak, be- "come 'engrafted' on or into our Language. It is derived "from the word '*nepos, nepoti.*'* Need I tell the gentlemen "opposite, the literal meaning and significance of those "words? They mean—for the general information of my "honorable friends opposite I will give the literal translation "—"nephew—of a nephew!" (Tremendous cheers from the opposition benches.)

"Now, in all fairness and candor, can I not ask, sir; can "I not ask why did not the Speech from the Throne mention "the little incident—the little fact—that the Contractor for "the Kettlekettle Bridge was the great-grand nephew of the "Mauve member—the Government member—for the Elec- "toral District of Catalinha??" (Tremendous cheers from the Bleu members.)

Then he continued pensively: "I regret that I cannot "support my Hon. friends, the mover and seconder of the "Address. I am a loyal citizen of the Land—a loyal subject "—my Constituents in Pussandra South are also loyal and "patriotic citizens and subjects. The address is lacking in "the important matter which I have mentioned, 'Let 'em say "who *pay*l'" (Loud opposition cheers.)

"And I will therefore, Mr. Speaker, with your permission, "move—seconded by my Hon. friend the member for East "Pussyburg—a resolution of 'want of confidence' in the Gov-

*I wonder if old "Cornelius Nepos" of Latin fame, had anything to do with the matter—Translator.

"ernment of the Day." (Loud and continued cheers from the opposition benches.)

To show how closely "Party Lines" were run in the Land at the time of this narrative, the newspapers issued next morning showed that the Resolution of "Want of Confidence" was only defeated by the "narrow majority" of three!

And the funny thing about the matter is that as far as one can ascertain—as far as it now appears—*nothing wrong had been done by anybody*—except it were wrong for the M. P. for Catalinha to have a great-grand-nephew!

It seems there were two leading Government Roads or "Colonization Roads," as they were generally called. One, "the Great Colonization Road," started at the Capital—Mieauburg—and ran south to West Catburg—that is, to the half of the embryo City of Catburg which was situated on the west side of the Cattawaul and hence called "West Catburg," is started again on the east side of the Cattawaul at East Catburg and ran south to Pussyburg. There was a Ferry Service between West Catburg and East Catburg. The Ferry Boats used were large affairs—big enough to take across a farmer's whole outfit—team of stout horses, waggon filled with potatoes or turnips or oats or what not.

"The New Colonization Road" started at West Catburg and ran west or a little south of west into the new and rapidly-settling District of Pussandra.

Well, the Government built and maintained these "Colonization Roads"—and wherever the Road crossed a stream or "Creek" (generally pronounced "Crick") a Bridge had to be built and kept in repair by the Government. Of course, in connection with the building and keeping in repair of Colonization Roads and Bridges a large sum of money had necessarily to be spent and disbursed every year by the Government. There was a special Branch of the Crown Lands Department at Mieauburg which had entire charge of the building and repairing Colonization Roads and Bridges—the Branch being called "*Le Bureau des Colonisation Chemins et Ponts.*"

About half way between East Catburg and Pussyburg the Kettlekettle Creek tumbles noisily into the classic Cattawaul

and in the course of its route "the Great Colonization Road" crosses the Kettlekittle. The Creek is pretty wide at this point and a pretty long and high Bridge is required.

For some years, and since the Road was first built, a wooden structure had sufficed. This old Bridge had done good service and might, perhaps, if it had been "patched up"—as the saying is—have answered the purpose for a while longer. But the traffic on the Road was already great and was steadily increasing, and the Department thought it would be in the interest of the traveling public if an iron Bridge were built over the Kettlekittle.

The Government Engineer advertised for tenders for the construction and the contract was awarded to a large Bridge-Building concern at Catburg. The work was done to the satisfaction of the Government Engineer and in a few weeks a stately iron structure spanned the classic Kettlekittle. "So far so good"—as the saying is. The farmers and draymen who used the Bridge thought everything was all right. The Bridge certainly looked a fine and strong structure.

But "like a thunder-bolt out of a clear sky"—as the saying is—the report came and was speedily noised by the Bleu Press all over the Land, that the President of the concern which built the Bridge and whose name appeared carved on the Bridge itself at each end: "Built by the East Catburg Bridge and Dock Building Company (Limited);" that the President actually was a great-grand nephew of the sitting Mauve member—the Government member—for Catalinha.

What all this had to do with the matter is not quite easy at this date to understand. The work was let by tender and done by contract; the Bridge itself was not within the Constituency of Catalinha; the President of the Bridge Company did not live in that Constituency—nor was the Head Office of the Company in that Constituency. Nor was it even alleged that the member for Catalinha had had anything personally to do with the matter one way or the other.

But then, according to the Bleu press, the affair was clearly a matter of "Nepotism;" was not the President of the Bridge Company the great-grand nephew of the Government member for the Electoral District of Catalinha?

Did not that fact settle the matter?

At any rate, the fact that such a "hubbub" could be raised and such a "tempest in a tea-pot" brewed over the matter, showed that the people generally felt that they now had time and leisure to make a study of "Politics" as a science—so to speak. It also showed that a new race or class of people was being raised in the land, viz: "the professional politician."

In the early days—the "pioneer days"—the people were too busy to bother with "Politics" and there were no such people as "Professional Politicians." There was no time for "hubbubs" or "tempests in tea-pots."

But now—"nous avous change tout cela," said "the professional politician."

In the early days there was no room in the little busy world for such an occupation as that of the "ward politician" or the "professional politician"—but now! alas!

Well, the Resolution of the member for Pussandra South had been defeated by a majority of three, and the Speaker had just declared the result when a loud rap—three times repeated—came at the Chamber Door.

In order to "ascertain the cause of the alarm" we had better go back a little—only a few hours. Amongst the members of the Upper House—"Les Sieurs"—none was better known or more prominent than Le Sieur D'Ulric.

He had a large estate or sheep ranch in the Blue Mountains about due east of Catburg. The now-famous Kettle-kettle Creek or "Crick" took its rise in some springy land at the northeast corner of the Ranch.

The Sieur remained on his estate all the year except during the few weeks during which Parliament would be sitting. During that time, of course, he was in the capital—Mieauburg.

The Sieur and King Grimalkin the First were great friends. For years His Majesty had been in the habit of making frequent visits to the Mountain Home of D'Ulric. Sometimes the King would remain weeks at a time with his friend. During the Sittings of the Upper House the Sieur was a welcome guest at the Royal Palace on "the Big

Square." In fact, the King would not have permitted his friend to have lodged at a Hotel.

I should not forget to add that D'Ulric had another great friend—not a Royal one—not a Noble—but a plain Commoner—named Machelle. This gentleman lived with his widow mother on a neighboring Ranch in the Blue Mountains, and for years D'Ulric and Machelle had been constant and almost inseparable friends, "chums" and "comrades." Some years ago, in order that the friends might not be separated during the time the "House de les Sieurs" was sitting, D'Ulric hit upon a plan which had worked very well; there were several gentlemen who every Session attended the House and performed certain little official duties; the duties were so light that the office was practically a sinecure. The occupants of the office were generally called "Sessional Writers"—sometimes "Assistant Clerks."

Well, Machelle received the appointment as "Sessional Writer" and had in the discharge of his official duties given general satisfaction to the noble Sieurs on each side of the Upper House.

On the morning of the day on which, in the House of Commons, the member for Pussandra South had made such a vigorous denunciation of the Mauve Government, and the Mauve Policy, and the Mauve affairs generally, the King called on the Sieur before the latter had started for "the House." After seating himself in an easy chair near the open window and refilling his pipe and lighting it—His Majesty opened the conversation thus:

"Comrade Ulric, I have come to have a 'confab' with you. "And I am afraid it is rather of a serious nature. I must "apologize, but I cannot help it."

"My Liege," said the Sieur, "if there is anything on your "mind—anything in which I can possibly help you—you "know you only have to command me."

"I know that, old man," replied His Majesty, rising and affectionately placing his hand on the Sieur's shoulder, "the "only command I have to make at present is that you fill your "pipe and light it; then I will proceed to unburden my mind."

"Alright, my Liege, your command shall be obeyed—but"

(looking at his watch) "would I offend your Majesty if I reminded you that in about twenty minutes I shall be due in my seat in the noble 'House de les Sieurs.' "

"I will ask you, my friend, as a favor to me," replied His Sovereign, "to forego attendance at the House this morning. You can send a message of apology to the Speaker and you can, of course, attend the evening Session. It will take us a little time to have our 'confab,' and after you have heard what I wish to say, you will agree with me that the matter is of sufficient importance to warrant me in making the request."

Thereupon the Sieur despatched a suitable letter of apology to the Speaker, and this being done, and having filled his pipe and lit it, and having seated himself in an easy chair *vis à vis* with his friend and monarch, he waited to hear the important matter concerning which his Royal friend and host wished to speak to him.

"Ulric! I will at once plunge '*in medias res*'—as learned authors say—and then afterwards I can explain. I am about to resign my kingly crown; about to abdicate the 'throne.' "

"Nonsense! Excuse me, my Liege, but I cannot help it! 'Nonsense!'

"It is a fact, nevertheless," continued the King.

"I presume I have not heard you aright or am rather 'obtuse this morning,'" said the Sieur, wonderingly.

Then the King proceeded: "I knew it would surprise you and it will greatly surprise the noble Sieurs of the Upper House and the loyal Commoners of the Lower House when I also make to them the announcement this evening. The fact is that I came to the conclusion some weeks ago and have thoroughly considered the whole matter. It seems to me that the Land would perhaps be better governed if we had a Queen—some fair one to reign over us. Please don't interrupt me, my friend. There are fair 'Queens of the Household' all over the Land—in merchant's mansion and in shepherd's cot. Why should we not have a Queen on the throne? The experiment is worth trying at all events. 'Yea's ago, when I was elected by the unanimous vote of

"both Houses of Parliament to the responsible position of "King, I only accepted the Kingly office on the distinct understanding that I could resign at any time I saw fit on giving three month's notice of my wish and intention so to do. The Act of Parliament which vested in me the Kingly office contains this right of abdication—it also gives me the right—subject, of course, to ratification by both Houses—to name my successor in office. Now, having come to the clear conclusion that the Land of the Grimalkins should be governed by a Queen, it becomes my plain duty to resign—to abdicate. Please don't interrupt me until I am entirely finished. I don't want to 'lose the thread' of my discourse—as the saying is. Now, as to who the Queen shall be I cannot say. I have not decided on any person—any Lady—in whose favour I should abdicate; therefore I cannot exercise my right to name a successor. I have given the whole subject a good deal of thought. It seems to me the choice of a Queen should fall upon some one outside and not inside the realm. You see there are already so many uncrowned Queens in the Land—so many fair 'Queens of the Household'—each of whom perhaps is equally deserving of the high honor, and any one of whom probably would be equally capable of filling the high office with credit to herself and honour to the nation. And then, my friend, I am afraid it might give rise to a certain amount of jealousy if the choice fell upon any one out of the hundreds—probably thousands—uncrowned Queens of the Household, living in the Land of the Grimalkins. I have bethought myself of a way in which the whole matter can, I think, be easily and quickly and fitly arranged—that is, if you and your friend Machelle will consent."

"I and my friend Machelle consent," wonderingly repeated the amazed Sieur.

"Yes—I am going to suggest to the two Houses of Parliament—of course, the consent of yourself and Machelle being firstly obtained—that an Act of Parliament be forthwith passed vesting in you and Machelle the power to choose and select a Queen for the Land of the Grimalkins from without the Land, and conferring upon the subject of

"your united choice the throne which is to be vacated by me
"at the expiration of three months from to-day."

"I don't want to interrupt your Majesty," said Ulric at this point; "I simply wished to observe '*en passant*'—as it "were—that you are 'taking my breath away'—as the saying "is. And that it is not considered quite 'good form'—as the "saying is—for one person to take away the breath of an- "other. In fact, I might go further and enlarge upon the "proposition—somewhat thusly: A person cannot live "without breath; if you take away a person's breath you do "thereupon, therefore, prevent his living—you are therefore "killing him. As I have said, this is only a little remark *en* "passant—as it were—and in order to relieve my pent-up "feelings—as it were. I apologize for interrupting you in "your so-pathetic recital. Will your Majesty now proceed?"

"I have nothing more to add that I think of just now," said the King.

"Are you really in earnest, my Liege?" asked the Sieur.

"Really and truly," answered the King.

"I wonder what Machelle will say," said Le Sieur—partly to himself and partly to the King.

"Oh, I have no doubt as to that," said His Majesty; "he "will be glad to accompany you anywhere and on any errand "—saying nothing about the delightful and extremely ro- "mantic character of this particular errand. You are both "‘Ladies’ Men’—as the saying is—both devoted ‘Squires “aux Dames.’"

"My Liege, I am sure you will pardon my not talking very "much just now. I have not yet, in fact, fully recovered my "breath. But—weak as I feel—might I ask your Majesty "why you, who are so gallant a man, as well as monarch— "why you, who are yourself a devoted ‘Squire aux Dames’— "why you, who carry within you the romantic heart of a "Poet—why, in fact, don't you get a ‘Queen of your own?’"

"A Queen of my own!" echoed the monarch.

"Yes—surely out of the hundreds—or was it thousands? "—of ‘uncrowned Queens’—‘Queens of the Household’—as "you so poetically, and yet truly, have remarked—you could "choose a Lady who would not only be the Queen of your

"Heart and of your 'Household' but also Queen of the fair
"Land of which you are King! My Liege—let me make a
"practical suggestion—you know I am a practical man and
"a sheep Rancher: do this—follow my suggestion—and thus
"settle the matter."

"It cannot be! It cannot be," said the King, sighing deeply.

"Pardon me, my Liege, pardon me, if in my jesting mood
"—you know it is my nature to jest—I have said anything
"to wound your feelings. They do say, my Liege—our loyal
"subjects sometimes say—that you have been '*crossed in
love.*'"

"Crossed in love?" repeated the Monarch.

"Yes, that is what people sometimes say, my Liege; and
"it is no wonder—considering that you—such a handsome
"man—and a man with such a romantic spirit and tempera-
"ment—and withal such a gallant 'Squire aux Dames'—have
"remained single."

"Are you feeling strong enough, just now, to listen to a
"short story concerning myself—the narration of a little in-
"cident which occurred years ago and which, perhaps—in
"a measure, at least—may bear on the matter of your last
"remarks?"

"Please proceed, my Liege. If it is romantic I shall be
"pleased to hear it—that is, if it will not pain your Majesty
"to make the narration."

"It was one stormy day, in the early winter, some twenty
"years ago. The snow had commenced to fall earlier than
"usual that season—already the snow was so deep that teams
"found it hard work to navigate the country roads—and
"single conveyances found it almost impossible to proceed.
"All that day it snowed and snowed and snowed, and it
"blowed and blowed and blowed until in some places the
"'drifts' were as high, nearly, as the houses. Navigation on
"the roads ceased entirely. I do not know how the new Rail-
"way which is being built would do under such circum-
"stances, but the stage coaches had to 'give it up as a bad
"job'—as the saying is. I had, you perhaps may remember,
"been visiting your Estate and I was on my way home to the

"Capital. I had snowshoed across the Trail from your "Mountain Home to Catburg. It was hard work; there was "no 'crust' as yet—it was too early in the season. The snow "was deep and soft and wet. As an old song says—so "pathetically—

" 'The hail was hard to follow,
" 'The snow was deep and wet,
" 'I sink down o'er my boot tops,
" 'My darling! oh my pet!'

"To show you how fast the snow fell that afternoon, I "may say that as I tramped along the snow entirely covered "my shoe marks, and as I looked behind me, instead of "seeing the usual pretty track behind which one's snow shoes "generally leave, there was nothing but 'the driven snow'— "and no sign that ever a snow shoe had passed over its sur- "face. The night stage usually left 'the Elephant and " 'Castle' in Catburg West—for Mieauburg—at seven "sharp; and traveling all night, and changing horses every "ten miles, reached 'the White Horse' at Mieauburg at about "nine the next morning.

"The Road had been so heavy and I had been so long on "the Trail that I was afraid I would miss the Coach. I "made the best time I could—reaching East Catburg at about "half-past six. Then without stopping to rest, I pushed "across the River, which, of course, was frozen. On my "way across I was afraid every minute that I would hear the "warning bugle note of the Guard, which you know he blows "so merrily about five minutes before he waves his hand to "the coachman and jumps to his seat. But no bugle note "came to my ear, although a stiff 'nor'wester' was blowing, "and the wind would have carried the sound to me. You "know 'The Elephant and Castle' is built on a little hill near "the bank of the River, and just near the westerly end of "the 'ice bridge' between 'the two Catburgs.' In the summer "the way ferries ply over almost the self-same course as that "over which one can walk after 'the ice takes'—as the saying "is. The cold weather had set in earlier than usual that sea- "son, and the 'ice bridge' had formed earlier than usual.

"Well, from the time I first could see the 'Elephant and 'Castle' I kept a sharp lookout for the coach—expecting I "would see it run out of the barn in a hurry, placed on the "street in front of the big Hostelry, and rapidly be filled with "travelers and driven off before I was within hailing dis- "tance. But nothing of the sort occurred. In fact, I had "hurried so that I would have been in time anyway, as it was "only three minutes to seven when I reached the Hotel Door "and looked at my watch. I said to the affable clerk, 'Do "you think the guard could hold the Mieauburg mail for "about ten minutes, so that I could take a cup of coffee and "something to eat, as I have been on the snowshoe tramp "all day?'

"The clerk laughed and said, 'You can have all night, I "guess, to eat a comfortable dinner, sir, as it is not likely "the stage will leave until the storm is over. Perhaps not "even then for a while, as the guard and conductor might "prefer to wait until the roads have been a little tracked— "after the storm.'

"Then he added: 'But there are the two officers them- "selves. You can talk to them,' and he pointed towards "two gentlemen who were sitting in front of the big open "fireplace at the other end of the big office or sitting-room— "a—smoking their pipes.

"'Thanks,' I said; 'I know them pretty well through trav- "eling up and down once in a while.'

"So I went over to the big fireplace and said, 'Excuse me, "gentlemen, I presume I am still in time for the night "coach to Mieauburg?'

"'No doubt about it, sir,' answered the guard. 'None in "the least,' said the coachman. And then they puffed away "at their pipes as hard as ever—and each looking as intently "into the fire as if they were reading their fortunes therein, "so to speak. The logs which had been placed on the fire "had burned so well that now they were nothing but red hot "coals, in which you could see houses and roads and castles "and stage coaches; and, in fact, most anything you wanted: "that is, if you were imaginative and romantic and poetical, "as, of course, were the conductor and the guard of 'the

" 'Flying Grimalkin,' as their coach was called. It was, you know, a very fine affair. At that time it was a new coach—"brand new"—as the saying is. The gold, or brass—"whichever it was—Grimalkin painted on its big, bulging sides fairly shone, it was so bright. Even now, after so many years, it is still a handsome coach; of course it has been painted two or three times since—perhaps several times.

" I know the coach well myself, my Liege," answered the "Sieur; " it is still called "the Flying Grimalkin," and I "fancy it has had the same Coachman and Guard for a great "many years." Probably the two officials who now preside "are the very self-same men who sat by the inn fireside that "evening a-smoking of their pipes. 'The Flying Grimalkin' "is a favorite Coach and a comfortable one—and whenever "I do not come by water I try and arrange to catch the " 'Grimalkin.' Of course if it is in summer time I generally "try and catch some upbound craft, my Liege—preferably "a 'stone-hooker.'

"A 'stone hooker'!"

"Yes, a 'stone hooker.' I prefer one of those jolly, easy-going, 'go-as-you-please' craft to most anything else. You know, I do not get away from the Ranch very much. In fact, I like the life there so much that I prefer living there, and would not change my life for that of anyone I know; "not even excepting the life of your Majesty the King of the "Land. Of course I have to come here to the Capital at "least once in a year and perform my duties as a member of "the House of Sieurs, but I am always glad when the House "prorogues or adjourns and I can get back to the Blue "Mountains. Well, generally 'the House' meets at such a "time that I can come by water, and then I slip down to East "Catburg and I watch for an opportunity of getting up the "River by water. I have come that way so often that I "know most of the Tug men and the 'Stone Hooker' men—"and men working on other craft sailing up and down the "classic Cattawaul. And I feel proud to say that I believe I "have many warm friends among those hardy mariners. Of "course none of them would take any money from me in re-

"turn for my passage. But when at Catburg I bethink me
"to buy something or other as a little present—sometimes a
"good brier-root pipe and a couple of pounds of the very
"choicest tobacco grown in Pussandra and 'sun-cured'—
"sometimes I buy two or three pretty little dolls and get some
"fair Modiste to dress them tastily; and I generally buy
"some good candies—of the variety known as 'mixed.' I
"get the candies done up in several small packets and I put
"them in my portmanteau—and it's a fact that never yet did
"I make the voyage between Catburg and Mieauburg with-
"out having *en route*—as the saying is—made a very good
"disposition of all my candies and any other little presents
"I might have in that portmanteau. But I am afraid I weary
"you, my Liege, and I had no business to interrupt you. I
"apologize. Please go on with the narration of the roman-
"tic incident which I thus rudely interrupted. You were
"only just commencing the 'Story.' In fact, my Liege—as
"one might say—you had only just finished the 'Preface'
"and were about to commence the 'Introduction.' Please go
"on, my Liege. I just love 'Romances' and 'Love Stories'—
"especially if they are true; and I know this will be a true
"Love Story."

"Well, Sieur D'Ulric, I will only continue the telling of
"my little Romance on condition that you go on and tell me
"all about those little presents—to whom do you give them,
"and so on. And then I want a learned dissertation on the
"marine *genus* 'stone hooker.' 'Between you and me and the
"lamp post'—as the saying is—I always admired greatly the
"'stone hooker' myself, and thought, after all, there was an
"air of 'reserve'—as it were—about them—an air of poetry
"and romance, so to speak. But no one else seemed to agree
"with me. So you can easily understand I am glad to have
"come across a man who frankly admits he admires the
"'stone-hooker.' I have often walked down to the docks,
"and along the quays, admiring them and wishing I could
"take a voyage on them. And that, by the way, is one of
"the many things I will be able to do when I am a King no
"longer. There are certain things a King cannot very well
"do, you know—and I am afraid it would be open to com-

"ment if I traveled very much on a 'stone hooker'—much "as I admire that species of craft. You know, I do manage "sometimes to get away for a holiday, and that then, when- "ever I can arrange it, I travel *incognito*.

"The time I made the journey on the stage coach I was "about to relate I was traveling *incognito*—people took me "for a sheep rancher from the Blue Mountains, and so I will "be one of these days, my good friend."

"You—a sheep rancher, my Liege!"

"Yes, Ulric; of course. That has been a happy 'Day dream' with me for years—a 'Castle in the Air.' Do you "think I could have visited your mountain ranch so often "and breathed the free, fresh air of your Blue Hills"—and here the eyes of both men traveled far to the eastward, where the faint, hazy outline of the Blue Mountains rose between sky and earth—as fair a picture as painter ever attempted to portray—"and not have caught something of the love you "have for your Blue Mountains and their ozone breezes? "Do you think I could have followed with you the 'sheep "runs' through the great 'forest primeval'—those beautiful "mountain avenues and mountain glades—without my heart "being filled with a love of the beautiful and a desire to live, "like you, the life of a mountain farmer? Do you think "that when I have followed with you the devious windings "of the beautiful mountain streams as they wended their way "down the hills and through the valleys and amidst the "clearings' on the low lands—the murmuring water rip- "pling gayly in the soft sunlight over the pebbly stones and "shining sand and chafing noisily when it met any impedi- "ment in its course. I have not caught myself the influence "of the sweet scenery and that my heart, like yours, has not "become attuned to nature?

"So you see, my friend, my mind looks forward with hap- "py expectation to the time when, having resigned the cares "which beset a monarch, I can—do as I please: tend my "sheep—go a-fishing for the rainbow-hued trout which lie "waiting for their prey in those little pools which you and I "know can be found wherever an old log or tree has fallen "across some mountain stream—or even once in a while, for

"further recreation, take a short voyage on a 'stone hooker.'

"But, Ulric, please proceed with your explanation as to the presents and then give me a learned dissertation concerning the classic 'stone hooker.' You know I like your 'learned dissertations.'

"Well, my Liege, as to the presents: there is not much to tell. I knew none of the capitaines would take any passage money, so, whether I took passage on a Tug or a 'wood scow' or a 'stone hooker,' I tried to have some little present to put in good hands. For instance, the Master of the 'Eliza May'—that weather-beaten 'old-timer' you may have seen round the docks—used to tell me sometimes, as we smoked together, great yarns about his two little girls at home—'little tots,' you know, my Liege; I knew all little girls like little dolls as well as candy, and if I took passage on the 'Eliza May' I would take care that I had a couple of pretty little dolls, nicely dressed, to send to the little daughters, as well as a couple of little packets of mixed candy—say a pound in each packet, my Liege.

"The same way with old Cap'n Briggs of the Tug 'Fire Fly'; he had four little girls home—three of his own and one an adopted little lady—and if I 'took ship'—as the saying is—on the 'Fire Fly' I remembered there were *four* packets of candy to get and *four* dolls to buy and get dresses and hats for.

"You see, my Liege, one gets used to looking after such things after a little practice."

"Yes, I suppose one does," replied the monarch.

"The gallant Cap'n of the 'flat scow'—or 'wood scow,' as they are sometimes called—'Jemima Annaleena,' has a little girl home and a little boy—and I have always to remember in that case to send along a spinning top or a dozen 'alley toys' or something which the young gentleman would not think beneath his dignity, when I am sending to his sister a doll, prettily dressed and wearing a most becoming hat.

"Then, my Liege, there are the several men working on the craft. I have got to know several of them—the mates, and the engineers and firemen. And we have many chats

"together on our journeys; and sometimes it drops out that 'some of them have dear little 'youngsters' at home, and so 'I try and remember them, too, once in a while.'

"But how do you manage to carry them all in your head?"

"I don't, my Liege; I carry them in my heart and in this 'little note book'—and here the gallant Sieur produced a little note book and proceeded—"You see, I could not commence to remember, after an interval of several months, all "about the different children; it would be impossible; one "could not keep them apart. And, my Liege, sometimes—in "fact, generally—there is a year, or nearly that length of "time, between my voyages on the Cattawaul—not between "the up and down trips, but between the up trips. For in- "stance, if 'the House' opens in May I come up by boat from "Catburg the day or so after the opening. The sittings last "from, say, a month to six weeks, then I go back down the "River to Catburg. Now, you see, I have the names of "some of the children connected with two or three of the "craft on which I have at different times taken passage:

"'Wood Scow, Jemima Annaleena; captain; little girl; little boy.'

"'Stone Hooker, Eliza May. Captain; two little girls.'

"'Tug, Fire Fly. Captain Briggs; four little girls.'

"You see, my Liege, in this Note Book I have several en- "tries of the same nature. I really could not remember the "different children or keep them apart but for these little "memoranda."

"That is a first-rate idea," said the monarch. "I think I "will start such a Book. I remember once reading, when I "was a Law Student at Mieauburg University, that Black- "stone, the great jurist, advised all Law Students to keep "what I think he called a 'Commonplace Book.' Maybe" (this the Monarch said thoughtfully and reflectively) "this is "the kind of Book Sir William Blackstone, Knight, meant."

"I wouldn't be surprised, my Liege," answered the Sieur; "that is, if he were a man who loved children."

"But," continued the monarch, "please go on and tell me "about the Dolls: where did you buy them, and how did you "find a Doll's Dressmaker and a Doll's Milliner? Your ex-

"perience in that line amongst the fair modistes may have a touch of Romance, you know."

"Well, my Liege, I'll tell you all about it: I easily found a "Toy Store where they sold Dolls, and I soon got on friendly "terms with the very pretty and engaging and sweet demoiselle who presided at the Doll counter, and she advised me "—kind of confidentially—and as if it were a 'trade secret'— "as it were—that it was not a good idea to buy Dolls already "dressed and already hatted. They had in the shop a large "number of dolls entirely 'rigged out'—so to speak—but she "suggested I buy some plain dolls and take them to some "Lady in the Profession who would see that they were be- "comingly dressed and becomingly hatted, and so, since "then, I have always followed that course. I am glad I "have, because in that way I added to the circle of my lady "acquaintances one of the most loveable and charming young "ladies I ever met."

"You don't say so!" said the monarch.

"It's a fact, nevertheless, my Liege. The young lady in "the toy shop gave me a pretty little card. I have it yet" (here the gallant Sieur looked in the little card case attached to the note book and brought out a neat little card). "Here "it is. You see it reads:

"Mlle. Violette Carigny,
"Modiste aux Dollies,
"53 Carnarvon Square,
"Catburg East."

"But what is the matter, my Liege? You look pained. "I hope I have not said anything to wound your feelings or "to awaken sad recollections."

But the Monarch did not at once reply; he was looking fixedly and in a kind of dreamy sort of way at the reading on the little card which he held in his hand, and he kept repeating to himself:

"'Mlle. Violette Carigny, Modiste aux Dollies.' Can "this be my lost Violet—'my sweet Violet'?"

"I tell you what it is, old man," said the Sieur: "I came "pretty nearly loosing my heart to this same Mlle Violette;

"in fact, I don't know that I am heart-whole in the matter ;
"but if you have any prior claim, I will at once—especially
"seeing that you are my friend and the sovereign of this
"Realm—resign in your favor and relinquish all my right,
"title, equity, claim and demand both at law and in equity,
"and howsoever, and whereas, and wherefore, as the lawyers
"say ; but that is easy enough to do, as I don't suppose I
"have any claim, either legal or equitable—probably not even
"the ghost of a chance"—as the saying is."

"Ulric, please, *please*, PLEASE do not joke about this matter. I know you mean well. But the very story I was about to tell you was about a young lady named Violette 'Carligny.'

"Well, my Liege, if you will, after all these divers and "sundry digressions, proceed with your long-deferred yarn—"I beg our Majesty's pardon—I mean Romance—perhaps we "may be able between us to get a little light on the "romantic subject. They do say—the *oi polloi* say—you know, that "two heads are better than one."

"Well, Ulric, I left the two officials of the 'Flying Grimal-
"kin' a-lounging before the big fire and a-smoking their
pipes and a-seeing all sorts of pretty things in the red coals—
"stage-coaches, and 'Flying Grimalkins,' and what not, and
"I went in to dinner. I was so very hungry and I enjoyed
"my meal very much. Then I lit my pipe and sauntered
"up to the place where the two worthies were still a-lounging
"and a-smoking and a-seeing things in the coals, and I said,
"You gentlemen look so snug and happy. Can I be per-
"mitted to join the crowd and also gaze into the coals?"
"The two men stared hard at me, as if they thought that,
"perhaps, I was quizzing them or making fun of them; then
"seeing that I was in earnest, they laughed and said they
"would be glad to have my company. They, of course—as
"well as the people in the big Hostelry—took me for a sheep
"rancher from the Blue Mountains on the way to the Capital
"on business.

"Well, I sat down by the fire and smoked my pipe and
"stared into the red hot coals like the other two men, and
"for several minutes none of us said a word. I do not know

"whether either of them would have spoken at all if I had "not commenced the conversation. I do not suppose they "had spoken to one another from the time they had sat down. "They simply lounged and smoked and stared into the red- "hot coals and saw in them stage-coaches and roadside "hotels and relays of horses, and hostlers a-holding 'em by "their 'eds and 'Flying Grimalkins' and things. One pecu- "liar thing you may have noticed about the coachman and "guard of a real first-class stage coach such as the 'Flying "Grimalkin' is, and that is they always seem to dress the "same in summer and winter, and always seem to wear such "a multitude of clothes. I remember how surprised I was "to see these two grand officials sitting before that hot fire "and wrapped up and muffled up in a way to 'beat the band' "—as the saying is. The number of coats they had on and "waistcoats was a 'caution to cats'—as the saying is. And "the waistcoats were so pretty and gay. You may have "noticed that real first-class coachmen and guards of real "first-class stage coaches always affect scarlet waistcoats or "waistcoats having a plentiful supply of that particular "color in them; the material generally is either plush or "velvet or velveteen, or something like that. Well, of course "I wondered greatly how they could stand the heat, but I "did not think I should say anything in that direction for "fear of being misunderstood or of wounding their feelings, "so I said nothing about their apparent superfluity of cloth- "ing and did not appear to notice the matter.

"Finally I said: 'It's a strange thing, gentlemen, how "many things one can see in red-hot coals if one looks long "enough and stares hard enough.' They looked at me hard "for a minute so as to be sure that I was not 'quizzing' them, "and then the Coachman says: 'I always sees lots of things "in 'em. Don't you, Bill?' Bill says, says he: 'Right "you are, partner.' Then added Bill, 'I 'ave a leetle girl at "home (pronounced 'hum') who sees most' wonderful "things in the red-hot coals. She will sit before the fire "between her mamma and me and gaze into the hot coals "until her face is nearly as red as the coals themselves. You "see she is only a little mite of a thing, tho' coming six

"years old, and she sits down on a tiny little stool and then "she puts her little curly head between her hands like this, "and in that way she would sit for hours, if she could, looking into the red hot coals. Being so little and sitting on "such a low stool, she is nearer the coals than we are, and "perhaps that is the reason why she can see more in them "than we big people can. She will say to her mamma and "me: "There, quick! Don't you see papa's coach—(she "always calls the "Flying Grimalkin" papa's coach), and "it's just starting from the White Torsie (she always calls "the "White Horse" the "White Torsie")); look at the pretty "coach and see all the people in it—crowds and crowds. "And there's you, papa, and there's Mr. Johnsing (that's "you, partner, of course), a-sittin' in front a-drivin' the "teams.' And so she would go on for hours if we would "listen to her, I've no doubt. She really seems to see all "the things in the fire which she tells us about.'

"I made a mental memo that before the stage left in the morning I would purchase a packet of candies and send "them with my compliments to the little sight-seer."

"That was right, my Liege," said the Sieur. If you will "hand me back my note book I will make a memo of the "matter myself, so that I can keep track of the little girl."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the merry monarch. "Why, man, "this incident occurred some twenty years ago, and the little "sight-seer now wears long dresses and probably dresses her "hair in 'frizzes' and 'bangs,' etc."

"Oh, of course, I forgot," said the Sieur, laughing in his turn. "Will you kindly proceed? I really apologize for "interrupting so often. I am afraid if we keep on this way "it will be a long while before I hear your little Romance."

"Well," continued the King, "all the time 'Bill' was telling us that pretty little story about the pretty little sight-seer the coachman eyed him wonderingly. Finally when "Bill" had made an end of his narration Mr. Johnsing remarked: 'Wa'all, Bill, that was the longest speech I ever "heard you make—'twas an awful long speech from a stage "coach guard. First thing we know, if you keep on, they'll

"be running you for a "Member of the Commons House"
"next time there is an election in South Mieauburg."

"Well, then we all laughed, and I wished the jolly pair a
"good-night and retired, first asking them about what time
"the 'Flying Grimalkin' would start in the morning. Said
"the coachman, looking at 'Bill,' 'If Bill, here, is willing, we
"will pull out at eight sharp.'

"Said 'Bill': 'If Mr. Johnsing is 'greeable, I will blow my
"first 'alarm' at 7:55 a. m. to-morrow.'

"I'll try and be on time,' said I; 'but be sure and do not
"start without me.'

"Well, we were all up in good time in the morning, and
"at 7:55 a. m. the 'alarm' merrily rung from the guard's
"bugle, and at eight a. m. we started to *walk* towards Mieau-
"burg. I say '*walk*,' and I mean it literally; the snow was,
"oh, so deep, and our course was really like snow-plowing.
"We had to 'make a track'—as the saying is—for ourselves
"nearly the whole way from Catburg to Mieauburg. It was
"hard work on the teams. They would be pretty tired
"when they reached the 'relay stations,' I tell you. We
"changed teams every ten miles. It was walk, walk, walk,
"the whole way, and very slow progress. We were two and
"a half days making the journey which, under ordinary cir-
"cumstances, we would have made in some fourteen hours.
"But I did not find the time long for the first few miles. Just
"after the coach had started from 'the Elephant and Castle'
"on its walk to Mieauburg, I looked out of the window and
"saw a young lady hurrying towards us and waving her
"hand towards the coach. I called the attention of the guard
"to the fact and the coach was stopped. The team was glad
"to stop, I fancy, at any time on that trip, the snow was so
"deep. I jumped down even before the guard and helped
"the young lady into the coach. It is a great many years
"ago, but I will never forget the pleasure of those few miles.
"She was, indeed, beautiful. Well was she called 'Violet'—
"her eyes were of that lovely violet hue one sees in violets.
"I did not know her name was 'Violet' until just when she
"was leaving the coach. Then her father, as he took her in
"his arms, called her 'Ma Violette, sweet Violet.'"

Then the Sieur jumped from his seat, and putting his hand affectionately on the monarch's shoulder, said: "Did I not tell you, my Liege, 'two heads were better than one'? "I believe we have found her!"

The King rose hastily from his easy chair "Found her! "Found whom? Speak quick, Sieur!"

"Why, found your 'sweet Violet.' That is just what her "father, old Mr. Carligny, calls her yet: 'Ma Violette— "sweet violet.' "

"Why, who is 'old Mr. Carligny,' Ulric?" said the anxious King.

"Why, you impatient old fellow, if you will forgive a "humble subject thus addressing his beloved monarch, her "father—'sweet violet's' father—the father of 'Mlle Violette "Carligny, Modiste aux Dollies, 53 Carnarvon Square, Cat- "burg East,' in the Land of the Grimalkins. Don't you "look so bewildered, my Liege. I think I see some daylight "on this most abstruse subject. I have understood that "Mlle Violette and her father were away from this part of "the country for years—in fact, that for years they were liv- "ing on the very borders of the land in the far westerly part "of the Pussandra District. Well, the probability—at any "rate the possibility—is that very soon after you parted from "the 'faire ladye' she and her father departed for their new "home in the far west."

"I commence to think you may be right, Seigneur," said the King. "Now I come to think of it, both the young lady "and her father did seem sad and pensive, and it probably "was because they were just about to leave the part of the "country where they had lived so long. Probably the young "lady had been into the town (Catburg) arranging some de- "tails relative to their journey."

"Where did you say they left the coach, my Liege?"

"I don't think I yet said. It was at the first stopping "place or relay-house this side of Tomlinson's Landing. I "assisted the young lady to alight, and as I did so I said: 'I "do hope I may meet you again.' "

"What did she say?" inquired the Sieur.

"She looked up at me so sweetly and shyly with those

"beautiful violet eyes as she answered, 'I hope you may.'"

"Then her father hurried up and took her in his arms and said—I will never forget the words: 'Ma Violette—sweet "violet.' Then she introduced me to her father and said sweetly: 'Papa, this gentleman has been so kind to me.' I would have liked to have stayed and talked to them, of course, for a long while, but the coachman and guard were anxious to get along on the road, and one cannot blame them, seeing the roads were so bad and the progress made by the 'Grimalkin' could hardly fitly be described as 'Flying.'"

"I suppose stage coaches never do make a practice of stopping several hours enroute to allow passengers to pay court to faire ladyes or to serenade beautiful eyes, even if they are of a violet hue," thoughtfully remarked the Sieur.

"I would have stayed right there, of course, if I had known I was not to see the young ladye again, and would have waited over for the next coach. But I had some public business to attend to as soon as I could reach the Capital—some business connected with the state. I said to myself, however, that as soon as I possibly could—and by the first 'down coach' after I got through with my business, I would return and seek out my fair companion and her father. I did not have much time to think the matter over, at all events. The coachman was looking anxiously at Bill, and the latter was looking dubiously at me. He had already sounded his 'alarm.' At these 'relay stations,' especially when they are in a hurry, or behind time, they do not wait longer, as a rule, than simply to change horses. This maneuvre generally is effected very quickly, you know, as the hostlers and stable men are on the lookout for the incoming coach, and the new horses are all ready to be attached to the coach as it dashes up to the relay station. Of course we did not dash up on that occasion; we demurely walked up.

"Well, I said 'good-bye' and shook hands two or three times with the young lady and her courteous father. Then I jumped in the coach, followed by the impatient 'Bill,' and we walked away again on our journey towards the Capital.

"You may be sure I looked out of the window and watched
"the lady and her father as long as I could, but a turn in the
"road soon came and hid them from view. I remember also
"how sorry I was that, owing to the drifting snow, it was
"difficult to see out of the coach window. Inside of four
"days I returned to the same 'relay station' and spent two or
"three days trying to find my new-found friends, but all in
"vain. Need I say, Sieur, that ever since the hour I first
"saw her I have retained in my heart the memory of those
"beautiful violet eyes and that sweet smile, and that through
"all these years there have lingered in my ears those words—
"so softly, shyly and sweetly said—'I hope you may,' and
"Papa, this gentleman has been so kind to me.'"

"My Liege, you should have been a Poet or a Writer of
"Novels and Romances. This little Romance of yours—in
"fact, this little Prose-Poem which you have been narrating
"or reciting—is really delightful. But, all joking apart,
"your Majesty, I am very hopeful that now, after all these
"years, you are in a fair way again to meet 'Ma Violette—
"'sweet violet.' I'll tell you what to do: Put on that very
"romantic-looking sheep-ranching costume of yours—that
"very becoming dress you wear, you know, when you travel
"incognito—as the saying is; then journey down either by
"water or road to Catburg and call at 53 Carnarvon Square,
"Catburg East. Of course you should have some reasonable
"excuse for calling: you should follow my example and
"visit the faire modiste on professional business; in other
"words, my Liege, you should ask her kindly—in her professional
"capacity—to habit and be-hat two or three Dollies
"for you."

"Two or three Dollies—for me!" repeated the Monarch.

"Why, yes, my Liege. Ah, I see you don't know anything about 'Dollies.' Well, I'll tell you—in strict confidence—I did not know much about them myself until I commenced to buy them to give to 'the youngsters.' Since then I have been gradually increasing my knowledge. Lately—in fact, during this present session of the House of Parliament—I have been making rather rapid progress. The way it was, was this: You know both houses have

"been sitting late this session, listening to long-winded, "awfully tiresome speeches about all sorts of 'Election Clap-trap,' as it is fitly called. You know what I mean, my 'Liege; you surely have read in the newspapers something 'concerning

" 'The Great Kettlekittle Bridge Job.'

"Well, I felt I could not stand the late hours except I had "a good walk before dinner. So Machelle and I have for "some days been taking a nice little walk every evening along "Bay street. You know the street I mean, my Liege, the "pretty street which is built along the west bank of the Cat-tawaul. For several reasons it is a beautiful walk: one "sees the beautiful blue waters of the classic Cattawaul and "the shipping on the River, including, my Liege, the pictur-esque 'wood-scow' and the romantic 'stone-hooker'; then "one sees in the far east the dim outline of the beautiful Blue "Mountains—we three—you and Machelle and I—each love "so well, and where, I rather think, we each would fain be "this minute. Or rather, my Liege, I should confine and "limit that last remark to Machelle and myself. As far as "your Majesty is concerned, I presume you would rather be "at No. 53 Carnarvon Square, Catburg East."

"Precisely," said the Monarch, with a smile. "You are "quite a shrewd guesser, Le Sieur D'Ulric."

"Well, to continue my remarks," said the Sieur, "there are "so many dear little children living along that street, and "Machelle and I have, within the last few days, increased to "a considerable extent the 'circle of our acquaintance'—as "the saying is. We generally carry along with us a few "extra yens* and some candies. Sometimes in the course of "conversation with some little lady we learn that she has not "a doll, and then we generally try and supply the deficiency. "Of course as we do not know any young lady of the Pro-fession of *Les Modistes aux Dollies* practicing that Pro-fession in this, your Capital City, my Liege, we have had to

*The "yen" is apparently the current coin of "The Land of the Grimalkins," and, as stated in the third volume of these "Foolish Tales," is apparently worth about four cents of Canadian or U. S. money, or about two pence ("tuppence") English money.—Translator.

"content ourselves with Dollies already dressed and be-hatted at the time of purchase. Of course with the experience I have had, I know that these ready-made costumes and hats are not nearly as serviceable or as becoming as if we could have them prepared to order by some Modiste aux Dollies, but, then, we can only do our best. Now, my Liege, if you will take a walk along Bay street this evening with Machelle and myself, we will give you your first lesson in the Dollie business. You can go downtown in the meantime, if you kindly will, and purchase two or three Dollies at some Toy Store and some good Candies of the variety of 'mixed' at some Confectioner's, and kindly bring along, my Liege, a few spare yens. You, of course, must put on your usual *incognito* disguise; it would not, perhaps, be as well if the one who gave away the yens were known to be the very 'Grimalkin the First,' whose picture or medallion appears on one of the sides of the yen. By the way, your Majesty, why don't you 'haul over the coals'—as the saying is—the one, whoever it is, who is to blame in the matter of that same picture or medallion? It is really as bad as a Patent Medicine Advertisement Photograph. The photograph really does not 'flatter' you, my Liege. The fact is, no one who knows you, as I do, could tell you or recognize you from your photograph on the current yens of the realm. In fact, I, for one, would not particularly want to know such a man as the one whose 'fysiog'—as the saying is—appears on the yens of this realm; he is really hardly the man one would care particularly to know. I just mention this matter to you in a friendly way, your Majesty, not only for your own sake, but also in order to unburden my mind. But, after all, perhaps, it does not much matter, as far as you personally are concerned, if 'Grimalkin the First' is going to step down both from off the Throne of the Land of the Grimalkins and from off its 'yens.' But I do hope that if a Queen comes to the Throne that steps will be taken to the end that when she appears on our yens she may look 'real pretty'—as the girls say."

"Oh, D'Ulric, you are an incorrigible joker! Why don't you bring the matter up in the House of Sieurs? The

"learned and venerable Sieurs might take in good part a joke coming from you, whereas they would not take it nearly as well if it came from anyone else."

"Thanks for the suggestion, my Liege. I may take the matter up some time in the future when I have the time to spare. At present I will have my 'hands full'—as the saying is—if I have to go on a Queen-hunting expedition. Do you know, my Liege, I am commencing to like the idea a little better than I did when first you suggested it to me. The undertaking seems a romantic one—and then who "knows" (this with a gay laugh) "but that in finding a Queen for the fair Land of the Grimalkins I may also find—perhaps even in one and the same person—the Queen of my own heart and the Queen of my own Household?"

Then the joker added reflectively, speaking half to himself and half to the King: "I wonder if such a thing occurred "that I really were to 'lay siege'—as it were—to the heart "of the Fair Ladye whom I was instrumental in leading to "the Throne of the Grimalkins? Would or could possibly "such an act be construed as Treason or misprision of Treason, as the Lawyers call it?"

Then the Monarch laughed heartily and the Sieur could not help 'joining in'.

Machelle then was announced, and the Sieur said: "My Liege, this is the famous sessional writer, and our particular friend."

The genial Monarch cordially welcomed the Parliamentary 'quill-driver' and said, "How do you feel after your arduous duties, friend Machelle?"

"Oh, I feel so tired, your Majesty; in fact, 'done out'—as the saying is" answered the writer as he sunk into the easy chair his Royal friend pointed out.

"Why, what's the matter, Machelle?" asked the Sieur. "Have you had to write those horrible words many times during this last session?"

"What 'horrible words'?" asked the King.

"The Kettlekettle Bridge Job! my Liege," answered the Sessional Writer. "I have written those words so often this morning that I really know them by heart—like a Parrot"

"—as the saying is: 'the Great Kettlekettle Bridge Job'! I do wish the Legislators would go to sleep and forget all "about those words—forget how to roll them out so 'pat'— "as it were."

"Well, Machelle, His Majesty has come to the conclusion "that the country has heard those words too often lately, "and he has decided to give the members of the two Houses, "and also his loyal and liege subjects generally a sensation; "so that they will have something else to talk about, write "about, read about, think about, dream about—something "other than those horrible words which you have so glibly— "at is were—repeated."

"'A sensation'!!" repeated the Sessional Writer.

"Yes. Hereafter—that is, for a short while, at all events"—because, by the way, the 'sensation' involves the temporary cessation of your official duties as a sessional writer in "the House of Sieurs. Hereafter you may for a short while "write on your sessional papers and in your sessional books "the startling words:

"The King Resigns; Long Live the Queen."

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Machelle. Then turning to His Majesty, he said: "My Liege, our friend is such "a joker, one never knows when or how to take him seriously."

"He is serious now, however, Machelle," said the King, with a smile.

Then Ulric continued: "The Daily Papers to-morrow "and the Weekly Papers when they come out will not as "usual have room for the insertion in big head-lines of those "horrible words which you have lately uttered, but instead "they will show in large, lurid—so to speak—characters the "startling words:

"Resignation of His Majesty King Grimalkin the First! "The King Resigns; Long Live the Queen!"

"What do you mean, Ulric?" asked the astonished Sessional Writer. "Please do not speak further in Riddles. I "am rather weak to-day, having had to write the horrible "words aforesaid so many times lately; in fact, my 'symp-

"‘toms’ do not ‘sagatiate’* very well this morning. Kindly ‘unravel the Riddle.’

“Well, Machelle, the solemn fact is that our friend, this ‘gay Monarch, is about to come down from off the Throne ‘of the Grimalkins and from off the yens of the realm. ‘Henceforth you may write in that ‘fair, round hand’ of ‘yours in your Sessional Papers and in your Sessional Books

“‘*Sic Transit Grimalkinus Primus!*’”

“Is His Majesty really going to resign his Crown?” asked the astonished Machelle.

“Yes; no doubt about it. The fact is he has sat on the ‘verandah so much lately—that big verandah which faces ‘the glorious East—and he has looked so long and so long-‘ingly at the dim, blue outline of the so-distant Blue Moun-‘tains that he felt he could not stand it any longer, and he ‘decided to resign and to come and be one of us, Machelle. ‘In fact, a jolly sheep rancher on the Blue Mountains.”

“A Sheep Rancher on the Blue Mountains!”

“Yes! Why not?” asked the Monarch. “Would you ‘not like to have me as a neighbor? Don’t you think I ‘would make a good citizen of your mountain community?”

“Why, yes! Of course, your Majesty! But it is so sud-‘den, you know,” said Machelle.

“Now, Mr. Sessional Writer, please don’t be a girl!” said Ulric.

“‘A girl?’” repeated Machelle.

“Yes. It is only girls who are allowed to say, ‘It is so ‘sudden, you know.’”

“I guess you are right there,” said His Majesty. “But ‘please go on and explain to the bewildered Sessional ‘Writer why my Resignation involves the temporary resig-‘nation of his official position as a writer in the noble House ‘of Sieurs.”

“Why, yes. Probably you might as well. I cannot be ‘astonished any more, I guess,” said Machelle.

“Well, my muchly-astonished friend and comrade, the

*I think I have seen the words in italics in “Uncle Remus—His songs and sayings.”—(Joel Chandler Harris, Translator.)

"facts are simply these, or thusly: I will try and put them "as shortly and briefly as possible. In fact, if it is possible, "I will try and put them in the shape of a syllogism:

"The King resigns and vacates his Throne in favour of a Queen
"To be found and led to the Throne by you and me.

"Now, I have put the proposition so simply and clearly "anyone could understand it at a glance; a child could. Don't "be obtuse, Machelle; don't look so obtuse. I will repeat "the syllogism again, this time very slowly, clearly and dis- "tinctly:

"The—King—resigns—and—vacates—his—Throne—in—favour —of
"—a—Queen—to—be—found —and—led—to—the—Throne—by—you
"—and—me."

"Well! I never!" ejaculated Machelle.

"But you must not say that," solemnly said the Sieur.

"Say what?" asked Machelle.

"Well! I never!" answered Ulric—"don't be a girl—" "only girls say 'Well! I never!' But I will not joke any "more; the matter is too serious to be a joking matter. The "fact simply is that His Majesty is going to couple with his "Resignation a suggestion to the Gentlemen Commoners of "the Lower Ho^u and to the noble Sieurs of the Upper "House that they pass at once an Act of Parliament ap- "pointing you and me Ministers Plenipotentiary so to speak "with full power to search through the big world which lies "outside the limits of the fair Land of the Grimalkins for a "faire Queen—or a Fairie Queen for that matter if pre- "ferred—and having found her to offer her the vacant "Throne and the vacant Crown and the vacant place on the "Yens of the realm and the vacant place on the postage "stamps of the Land. If the faire Ladye accepts, then we "are to lead her to the Throne amidst the plaudits of a "happy people. There, have I, my friend, made the matter "any clearer to your comprehension—somewhat obtuse, per- "haps—the latter words of course being spoken 'strictly in "a Pickwickian sense'?"

"I think I am commencing to understand the matter a lit- "tle," said Machelle. "But is the understanding that we are

"to go *outside the Realm*? Is that imperative? There are "hundreds—probably thousands—of uncrowned Queens—"faire Princesses—within the limits of this fair Land."

"So I have already tried to explain to His Majesty"—my gallant friend—"but he is inexorable, and, after all, his "reasons, which doubtless he will give to the Houses of "Parliament this evening, are very reasonable—as all reas- "ons should be—in fact, they are lucid and convincing. "Now, my friend, I must say that first when the project "was mentioned I was rather dubious and did not altogether "like it; but the more I think about it the more I like it; in "fact it improves on acquaintance, so to speak; it will be an "Adventure! you and I like 'Adventures'; it will be *Roman-* "tic! you and I like 'Romances'; and then fancy our Dign- "ity—our official position! we will be

"*Ministers Plenipotentiary!* think of that, Machelle; we "will be

"*Ambassadors Extraordinary!* think of that, my friend!

"And then another thought has lately come to me," con- tinued the Sieur, speaking reflectively and kind of half to himself; "we all have read of the famous Earl of Warwick, "the 'King Maker,' in early English Days; you and I will be "Queen makers! Just think of it, Machelle! What a proud "position to occupy in the History of one's country, my "friend from the Blue Mountains!

"Just think of it," continued the eloquent Sieur; "in after "days, aye, even in the dim and distant future, the rising "generations—

"'creeping like snail'
"Unwillingly to school.*

"—the little school held in 'the little Red School House' "which those tiresome politicians talk about so much, Ma- "chelle—will read in their 'Primers' and 'Histories' the " 'Story of the Queen-Makers'! We will live, my friend, "in the hearts and in the memories of our countrymen! "What say you, Machelle, if you are offered the position of "a joint Minister Plenipotentiary—a joint Ambassador Ex- "traordinary—will you accept the position?"

*"As you like it."—William Shakespeare, *Act II., Scene VII.*

"I will follow you anywhere, comrade," said the gallant Machelle, rising and taking the outstretched hand of the Sieur.

"Well, that little matter is so far arranged," said the Sieur. "Now, there is another little thing I should mention: the King is going to accompany us this afternoon on our ante-dinner walk along Bay street. I want to introduce him to some of our little acquaintances, and I am glad he is going to make their acquaintance, so that when you and I are away he can once in a while walk along the street and keep up the friendship. And we may be going away very soon, my friend; I am one of those fellows who do not believe in letting 'the grass grow under their feet.' If I received the appointment to-night I would probably feel like starting out on the search for a Queen to-morrow."

"And I also," said Machelle.

"I knew you would, Comrade," replied the Sieur. "Now, if our Royal Friend will hurry away and put on his *"incognito"* disguise of a Sheep Rancher from the far-off Blue Mountains, we will accompany him down town and show him where he can buy two or three 'Dollies' and also where he can lay in a small supply of 'Candies'—and then we will be 'rigged out'—as the saying is—for our walk along Bay street to see 'the Babies round the Block'—as 'the song says.'

"I'll make a suggestion," said Machelle. "Let us introduce our Royal Friend to some of the youngsters as 'Santa 'Claus.' Of course this is June and 'Santa Claus,' as a rule, does not come to the Land until Christmas time—but we can say he is just taking a little holiday. It will be a nice little joke—and it will amuse the youngsters anyway."

In about an hour afterwards three gentlemen lazily sauntered along Bay street—sometimes stopping to admire the romantic profile of a "wood scow barge" or of a "stone hooker," as the weather-beaten craft wended their way up or down the classic Cattawaul; sometimes stopping to gaze lovingly at the dim, faint outline of the Blue Mountains stretching away in the far east, like the beautiful background of a beautiful picture; sometimes they would even

think they could detect the faint outline of smoke rising lazily up to the sky from some new settler's "logging" or "summer fallow," and then they could even imagine they inhaled the fragrance so dear to everyone who loves the wild woods—the smell of the burning brush heaps and firebrands; sometimes stopping to talk confidentially to some dear little prattler—one of "the youngsters" with whom the Sieur and Machelle had lately become acquainted.

Several fathers and mothers were surprised to hear within the next day or two that "Santa Claus" had really been in town and had actually walked along Bay street within a short time past. There could be no doubt at all about the matter—at any rate there surely could be no reasonable room for doubt. The very pleasant strange gentleman had been formally introduced as "Santa Claus"; it was stated and explained that he was simply taking a little holiday or recreation; and, in order "to keep his hand in"—as the saying is—or from the force of habit—he carried with him a few "odds and ends" of children's presents—loose in his big pockets; there surely could not be any doubt about the matter. Here—as an "*argumentum ad hominem*," as the Logicians say—were alley-taus for little boys, and little packets of "mixed candies" for little girls and little boys, too—and pretty little dolls with blue eyes and flaxen curls for the young ladies. And it was rumoured amongst "the youngsters" on the street that "Santa Claus" had been rather liberal on the particular evening in question in the matter of "yens."

But if the children enjoyed the fun "it goes without saying" that the three "grown up" men also enjoyed it, and in after days they often laughed heartily over the huge amount of pleasure which was crowded into those few minutes during which, in the "leafy month of June," they helped to perform on Bay street in the Capital City a Christmas Pantomime—in fact, a Children's Matinee.

Well, we will now go back to the moment when the rap, tap, rap came on the door of the Commons House of Parliament.

"Mr. Sergeant-at-Arms," said Mr. Speaker, "will you

"kindly ascertain the cause of the alarm thus given at our Chamber Door."

Then the Sergeant-at-Arms solemnly proceeded to the Chamber Door, and on opening the little slide or wicket in the door, saw Mr. Black Rod, of the Upper House, standing demurely outside. The Sergeant of the Lower House then gravely said to Mr. Black Rod, "Pardon me, until I "duly report your visit to Mr. Speaker." Then he shut the wicket, and proceeding to the space in front of the Speaker, and in fact standing in front of the little table on which solemnly lay the mace, he gravely saluted Mr. Speaker and said: "Mr. Speaker! Without the Chamber Door of this "House of Gentlemen Commoners of the Land of the "Grimalkins stands Mr. Black Rod, of the noble House of "Sieurs!"

"Admit him in due form," said Mr. Speaker. Then he—Mr. Speaker—rapped solemnly six times with his little ebony gavel of office on the little desk before him, and all the Gentlemen Commoners rose and stood on their feet. Meanwhile the Sergeant-at-Arms solemnly took up the mace from the table where it had been quietly resting since the opening day of the present Session, and bearing the mace aloft in his hands before him, solemnly stalked to the Door of the Chamber, which he flung wide open—at the same time making a respectful obeisance to Mr. Black Rod and saying respectfully : "Mr. Black Rod, by command of the Honourable "the Speaker of this House of Gentlemen Commoners of the "Land of the Grimalkins, you are permitted to enter this "Chamber. Please follow me."

Then the Sergeant-at-Arms commenced to walk backward—ever and anon looking wistfully behind him to see that he did not trip over anything in his backward journey—and, of course, still bearing aloft the mace in his hand as if it were a protection between him and Mr. Black Rod, of the Upper House. Thus escorted, the latter gentleman in due course reached the open space in front of the Speaker's Dais.

Then the Speaker solemnly arose, and bowing to Mr. Black Rod, said: "Mr. Black Rod! Have you any message

"from the noble Sieurs of the Upper House to the Gentle-
"men Commoners of the Lower House?"

Then Mr. Black Rod bowed to Mr. Speaker of the Commons House and gravely answered: "I am requested by "the Honourable the Sieur Chancellor to invite the Honourable the Gentlemen Commoners of the Lower House with "their Speaker and their mace, to attend upon the noble "Sieurs of the Upper House in their Hall of Assembly."

Then he gravely bowed to Mr. Speaker, and turning to the Government members standing to the Right of Mr. Speaker, bowed gravely to them, and then turning to the opposition members standing to the Left of Mr. Speaker, bowed gravely to them—then he bowed gravely to the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Lower House—and then he commenced to retreat out of the room, walking backwards and solemnly eyeing the mace, which, in the hands of the Sergeant-at-Arms, followed his backward progress. Next in order, after the Sergeant-at-Arms with the mace, came Mr. Speaker—then the members of the Cabinet—then the Government members, two and two—then the opposition members, two and two—then the Sessional Writers, two and two—then the Pages, two and two—and in this way the solemn procession wended its way through the big Hall or vestibule outside the Commons Chamber and along the several passages leading between the Sieurs' House and the Commons' House. On reaching the former House, the Door was found to be not a Door but a Jar—as the saying is—and entering the Chamber of the noble Sieurs, the procession wended its way to the open space in front of the big raised platform or Dais on which was not only the Throne of the King of the Grimalkins but—situated a little lower down—also the Chair of His Excellency the Sieur Chancellor. I should have said that ever and anon throughout his long backward journey, Mr. Black Rod cast wistful glances behind him to see that there was nothing in his way over which he might stumble or trip. I should also have said that when the Commoners reached the Door of the noble Sieurs they found those Hereditary Legislators clad in their Robes of office—long blue gowns prettily trimmed

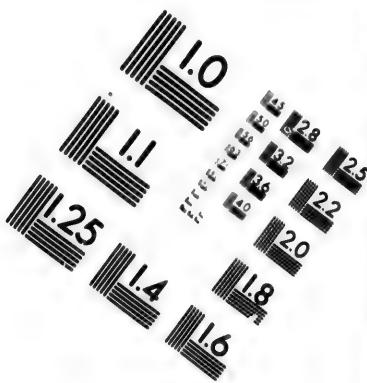
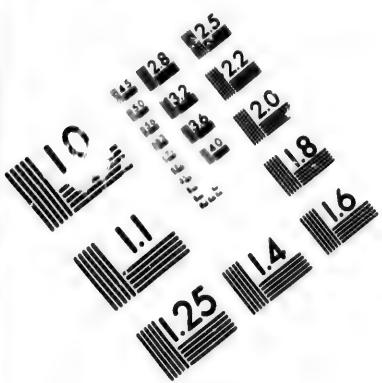
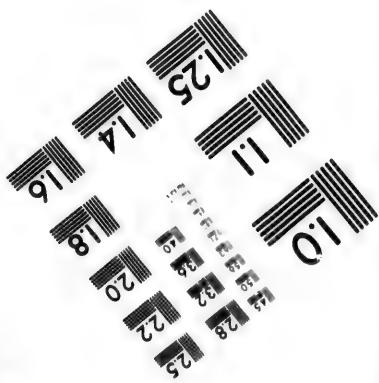
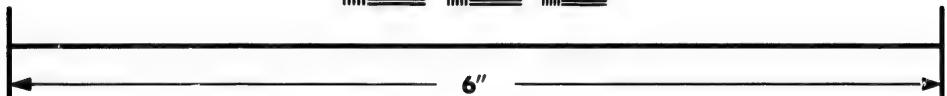
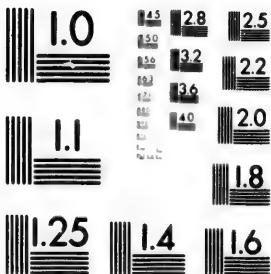


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with crimson sashes and edged with white fur—and as the Commoners entered the Door, His Excellency the Sieur Chancellor gave the customary six raps with his ebony gavel on the top of the little desk before him, and the noble Sieurs rose to their feet.

On the Throne sat His Majesty King Grimalkin the First.

As soon as Mr. Black Rod had reached the vacant space immediately in front of the Chair of His Excellency the Sieur Chancellor, he solemnly halted and turned to "the right about"—making the manouevre with the necessary three steps. Then he bowed low to His Majesty—then to His Excellency the Sieur Chancellor—then to the noble Sieurs standing to the Right of His Excellency—then to the noble Sieurs standing to the Left of His Excellency—then to Mr. Speaker of the Commons House—and then to the members of the Commons House collectively. Then His Majesty said: "Mr. Black Rod, kindly find seats for my "Liege subjects the Gentlemen Commoners. I do not like "to keep them standing; probably you could find seats for "them in some of the Galleries." Then the Monarch asked the Sieur Chancellor kindly to seat the audience, and His Excellency gave the necessary single rap and the noble Sieurs and the Gentlemen Commoners were seated—also Mr. Black Rod and Mr. Sergeant-at-Arms, and the Sessional Writers and Pages belonging to each House. Then His Majesty said:

"May it please your Excellency the Sieur Chancellor—" "and you my noble Sieurs—and you my Gentlemen Commoners: I have come to meet with you at an unexpected "time, and when I have told you what I have to say, I fancy "you will all be greatly surprised. 'To make a long story "short'—as the saying is—your Excellency, Nobles and "Gentlemen—I am come to resign this Throne—to vacate "my great and responsible Office of King of this fair Land."

A blank look ran round the audience—expressions of surprise came from all parts of the large Hall: "Resign the "Throne?"—"It cannot be"—"Vacate the Office of King?"

"Perhaps I had better go on and explain," continued the King. "I knew, of course, you would be surprised. The

“fact is that I have been thinking the matter over seriously for a long time—‘cogitating’ over it—as the saying is; and ‘I have come to the conclusion that it would be better for ‘this Land if this Throne were filled by a Faire Ladye or a ‘Brunette Ladye—a Faire Queen of the Grimalkins—or a ‘Brunette Queen of the Grimalkins.”

Murmurs of surprise came from all over the large Hall.

Then the gallant King proceeded: “There are, in this world, I am glad to know and to say, thousands of faire, ‘as well as brunette ‘Queens of the Household,’ and thousands of faire as well as brunette ‘Queens of Hearts.’ ‘There are thousands of uncrowned Queens.

“Now,” continued His Majesty, “I have been your King several years and have done my best well and faithfully to discharge the duties of that high office.”

(“Indeed you have,” came from all over the large Hall.)

“I deserve a Holiday—though I say it myself. At any rate, I would like a Holiday. I would like to be relieved from the cares of office—from the cares of Statecraft. The fact is, your Excellency, Nobles and Gentlemen Commoners, I wish to be a Sheep Rancher and to tend my sheep on the Blue Mountains.”

(Exclamations of surprise from all over the large Hall: “The King wishes to be a Sheep Rancher and to tend his sheep on the Blue Mountains!”)

“Now, you may remember, or you may have heard, or you may have read, or you may read it in ‘Hansard’—that when, years ago, I was elected by the cordial and unanimous ‘vote of your two Houses of Parliament to be King over this Fair Land—it was distinctly understood and agreed that I could resign at any time I wished upon giving three ‘months’ notice of my wish and intention so to do. It was furthermore mutually agreed and understood that I should have the right to name my successor—subject, of course, to the approval of both your Houses. Now, your Excellency, Nobles, and Gentlemen Commoners, I am come to give to you—which I hereby do—the requisite three ‘months’ notice of my wish and intention to resign this Throne. Now, as to my successor: I resign in favour of a

"Queen—some faire or brunette Ladye unknown as yet to
"me and to be chosen from without the Land by the noble
"Sieur D'Ulric and M. Machelle—a Sheep Rancher of the
"Blue Mountains and a Sessional Writer of this noble House
"of Sieurs."

(Expressions of surprise and bewilderment from all over
the large Hall.)

"If you will patiently bear with me, you will 'see at a
"'glance'—as it were—my meaning and the reason for the
"somewhat—at first sight—peculiar method of appointing
"my successor in office. It is true—as the noble Sieur
"D'Ulric and his friend and my friend M. Machelle have
"gallantly and patriotically pointed out to me—that there are
"hundreds—yes thousands—of faire and brunette un-
"crowned Queens in this Fair Land, any one of whom would
"fill this Throne with credit to herself and honour to this
"fair Land"—

(Loud and continued cheering from all over the large
Hall.)

"but you can easily see—on a single moment's reflection—
"that the difficulty would be in making a choice out of so
"many faire and brunette ones all equally deserving. And
"then, again, there is the great danger that such a choice
"could not be made without unavoidably giving offence—
"where none was intended. The ladies would not be jealous
"—they would not take offence—but their friends and rel-
"atives might; and in that way incalculable harm might be
"done unintentionally. Only one faire or brunette Ladye
"could be elected—all the other uncrowned Queens would
"have to be 'left home'—as the saying is.

"Now, it occurred to me, almost at the outset of my cogi-
"tations, that the choice must almost of necessity be made
"without the Land. Then it naturally occurred to me that
"we could not do better than place the great trust in the
"hands of the gentlemen whom I have named."

(Loud cheers from all over the large Hall.)

"I feel sure that you are now commencing to understand
"me and also to agree with me. The two gentlemen I have
"named are well known to all or most of you. I know them

"very well and have been on intimate terms with each of them for several years. I can assure you that you could not place the trust in better hands."

(Loud cheers from all over the large Hall.)

"I would add that the matter has been discussed with the gentlemen concerned. Owing to their innate modesty and diffidence and bashfulness, neither of them at first seemed willing to accept the great honour—and the grave trust thus suddenly thrust on them—as it were; but after some consideration they came to the conclusion that if you Nobles of this noble House of Sieurs, and if you gentlemen Commoners of the Lower House, saw fit in your wisdom to offer them the position, they would accept it and do their best to fulfill the trust."

(Loud cheers from all over the large Hall.)

"I would, therefore, ask that my notice of Resignation be 'spread upon the minutes' of each House—as the saying is—in a large and clerkly hand by the several and respective Sessional Writers whose duty it is to do the spreading. I would also ask that, as a formality, some Noble in the Upper House move and some Noble second a resolution 'that my Resignation be accepted; I would ask that the same formality be complied with in the Commons House and that the Resolution be duly 'spread upon the Minutes' of each House by the respective Sessional Writers of each House whose duty it is to do the spreading. Then I would ask that an Act of Parliament be passed 'in due and ancient form' by both Houses appointing the two gentlemen I have named Ministers Plenipotentiary and Ambassadors Extraordinary, with power to go outside of the Realm and there to elect and choose and make choice of a Queen for this Realm. I would also ask that each House, by Resolution duly moved, seconded, carried unanimously and duly and properly 'spread upon the Minutes,' pledges itself unanimously to endorse the election and choice so to be made as aforesaid by the Ministers Plenipotentiary and Ambassadors Extraordinary aforesaid." (Loud and continued cheering from all over the large Hall, and repeated cries of "We will.")

"In conclusion," continued the gallant King, "I will ask every Noble and gentleman present to rise and join me in saying:

"'Vive La Reine!'"

This was, of course, done with a will, and was followed by loud and continued cheering.



Act III.

THE SEARCH FOR A QUEEN—THE FINDING OF THE QUEEN.

SCENE: First in the Land of the Grimalkins; then in the Subterranean Channel leading from that Land into Lake Superior; then in the Wilds of New Ontario.

TEMPORE: King William the Fourth, of England, and King Grimalkin the First, of the Land of the Grimalkins.



HICH way do you purpose going, D'Ulric, mon "cher?" said Machelle the next morning, as the two friends, leaving the busy, bustling city behind them, emerged on the pretty "commons" which surrounded the city and which was used by the "jenesse doiee" as a ball ground and cricket field, and by the older and more sedate people as a Park and Promenade.

"Well, my inquisitive friend, don't you observe that we are tending northwards? In a few minutes we will strike the 'Northern Trail.'"

"I see. We are going northward, then; do you think we can get without the Realm that way? I have always heard that our forefathers—the early settlers in the Land—came from the opposite point of the compass; that is, they followed the classic Cattawaul up from its mouth—from the "Great Sea."

"So I have always heard myself," answered the Sieur, "but I have also been told by learned men that it is only reasonable to believe there should be a great country and a populous country to the north of us, if we could only get there. And, in fact, I have heard that there is one Sage in the country—one old Savant—who not only feels positive there is such a far northward country, but claims to have discovered the very pathway or route leading thereunto. Now, my idea is that we visit this old Sage and lay the whole matter before him and get his advice on the subject. You have probably heard of the one I mean—the Sage Oscar."

"Why, yes, I have heard of him ; he lives the life of a hermit somewhere away in the fastnesses, in the very wildest part of the Blue Mountains back of the Capital."

"Right you are, Machelle, as you generally are, my friend," answered D'Ulric ; "and we are now on our way to find him. "We may have some little difficulty in accomplishing our purpose owing to the fact that he dwells, as you have remarked, in the fastnesses, in the very wildest part of the Mountains. But I am hopeful we will meet with someone before long who will be able to give us better 'sailing directions' than I now have. Once we get into the depths of the hills, surely we will meet with someone who knows 'the hermit,' as I think the hill-folk call him."

In a few hours they had reached a wild and picturesque country—a rough-looking country ; high hills and "bluffs" towering away up into the air, but clothed with trees right to their very tops. The trail became narrower and harder to follow as they proceeded northwards. For the first few miles the country on each side seemed fairly well settled ; the main trail had every appearance of being well used, and frequently side trails or cross trails would intersect the main trail ; gradually the main trail commenced to show less frequent signs of use, and the side or cross trails commenced to become more rare, until they ceased altogether. The two friends had started on their journey in the early morning ; it was now getting near sundown and the trail had become so little used and was so overgrown and hard to follow that the travelers had more than once been of the opinion that, perhaps, they had better turn back. But, then, on the other hand, they were now getting into just the kind of country in which they could expect to find the Hermit Sage. Truly the country now could be said to be wild and mountainous and rough and almost inaccessible, and such was the nature of the country in which it was popularly supposed the Sage lived.

The Sieur remembered his informant had said : "You must keep on whilst the road gets worse and worse—until the trail gets so hard to follow that you almost think it cannot be followed any further ; and then just in the very wild-

"est and most picturesque place—just about on the very "height of land," and amongst the hills and the boulders and "the rocks you will find the Eagles' Nests and the Hermit's "Cave. Keep your eyes open for several large Eagles' nests "amongst the highest rocks, and right amidst the Eagles' "nests you will find the entrance to the Hermit's Cave."

"So let us keep a sharp lookout, Machelle," said the Sieur; "we are certainly getting into a favourable kind of country "for Eagles and Hermits or Hermits and Eagles."

By this time the sky had become greatly overcast. For some hours the travelers had thought it likely a big thunder storm was brewing; now deep mutterings of thunder could be heard resounding among the rocky hills and fastnesses of the mountains, and now and then vivid flashes of lightning shot athwart the landscape, lighting up as bright as noonday the innermost recesses of the forest and making the darkness seem more perceptible afterwards, for it had already commenced to get dark. The night had set in earlier than usual. The travelers were now at a standstill; they could not go forward, because even with daylight the trail had become so indistinct that it was difficult, if not well-nigh impossible, to follow it. They could not retrace their steps in the darkness without great danger of losing their way.

To add to their discomfort great drops of rain commenced to fall, and there was every appearance that a long night's rain was about to commence.

Just then a flash of lightning more vivid than any which had yet come suddenly lit up the whole landscape around them, and at the same time the belated travelers heard the discordant cries of some large birds and the flapping of their wings as the large creatures swiftly flew by them, and so closely that they could feel the vibration in the air as they passed. "The Eagles!" exclaimed both men at the same moment, and looking before them in the momentary glare of the lightning they saw the Eagles alight on the top of a little hillock only a few feet from them. The travelers remained motionless, waiting for the next flash, so that they could, during its short duration, advance further towards the Eagles' Eyrie. It was only a few seconds before the next

flash came, but to the men standing there in the now drenching rain the period seemed rather long. When the flash did come the travelers made a rush towards the rock, and as they reached its base they saw to one side of the rock what seemed the entrance to a large cavern.

There was no time to stand on ceremony. The rain was now pouring in torrents; so when the next flash came the belated travelers made a rush for the entrance of the cavern and found themselves within its portals and safe from the rain and the storm. Peering into the depths of the cavern the visitors noticed what apparently was a fire at the further end; it was apparently at the end, because as the flames shot up from the burning logs the travelers could see the further wall.

The visitors, of course, were in complete darkness except for the fitful light of the distant fire. Not knowing the way they had to proceed cautiously, and only could advance when from time to time the flames gave a more vivid light than usual. The further they were able to advance into the interior of the cavern—in other words, the nearer they got to the fire—the lighter it became and the quicker they could advance. Finally, when they reached a point a few yards from the fire they were enabled to make out surrounding objects pretty clearly and distinctly, and then they were sure that the figure they had been observing for some time was that of a man; in fact, was that of the Sage for whom they were seeking. For some time in the fitful light of the flames they had thought they could make out the figure of a man moving around at the further end of the cavern; now there could be no doubt. So the Sieur called out, "Good even, Sage Oscar!"

The Sage—he it was—wrapped his loose robe about him and advanced to meet his visitors. As he neared them the Sieur said in an undertone to Machelle: "It is 'the Hermit—'Sage; there is no doubt."

Machelle, who had never seen their host before, eyed him curiously as he advanced to meet them, and saw a far different man to what he had expected. Machelle had expected to see a thin, ascetic-looking man—a hermit with long, un-

combed hair and untrimmed beard; a man rough and uncouth in appearance. But their host, who advanced to meet them, was a genial—in fact, jolly-looking old man, with nothing ascetic or austere in his appearance; a scholarly-looking man, a kindly-looking man.

As he advanced to meet them he said courteously: "There are two of you, I see. I am indeed honoured. It is not often a Hermit like myself is so honoured. Ah, I see your dress is wet. I thought a big storm was coming up, and I see it has commenced to rain heavily. Come up to the fire and sit here and warm yourselves and dry your clothes. Ah, here are a couple of chairs. Sit down; that's it. Now we are comfortable. Here, I'll tell you what to do: take off your outer clothes and spread them out here to dry; and I think you had better also take off your boots and stockings. That's it. We'll soon be comfortable. Now, the next thing I'll do will be to get you each a cup of tea 'smoking hot,' as the saying is. There's nothing like a real good hot cup of tea to prevent one taking cold. I am a great lover of tea, you must know. I do not suppose there's any old woman in the Fair Land of the Grimalkins who enjoys her 'cup of tea' more than I, the 'Hermit of the Mountain,' as I understand some people call me. There's nothing like a cup of tea to warm you if you are cold; there's nothing like a cup of tea to cool you if you are suffering from heat. If you are weary and tired, it is the best 'tonic' you can take; so here's a cup of tea for each of you, my honoured guests. Is there enough sugar in it to suit your taste? Oh, don't thank me so much. You see I was just about to start to prepare my simple evening meal when I heard your 'good even,' and I had lots of hot water on hand, so it is no trouble for me to prepare an extra cup of tea; and I am really glad to see you. You are very welcome. I only wish I could give you better entertainment. But you are heartily welcome to the best I have, which will be a nice, fresh, broiled speckled trout for your supper in a few minutes, and some dry toasted bread to eat it with; and then you can light your pipes and smoke whilst I shake down your beds on the floor in front of the fire. They will not be very lux-

"urious, perhaps, only a few spruce and balsam boughs, but "they are fresh—only cut two or three days ago; and they "are fragrant of the wild woods and the mountains; and, at "any rate, neither the rain or the wind can reach you here, "and you might be worse off this very night. Now please "don't thank me so much. I am really overjoyed to see you. "It is so rarely a visitor ever comes this far north and so "high up in the mountains. Now, whilst you are taking a "second cup of tea I'll show you how quickly I can broil "half a dozen fairly-sized speckled trout. Here they are, "you see. I caught them this afternoon in one of the little "streams which meander down the mountain sides and which "all take their rise on this 'Height of Lands,' as it is called. "I cleaned them before I brought them home. It is no "trouble to clean speckled trout; there are no scales, and one "can prepare a trout for the toasting-fork 'in less than no "time'—as the saying is. After I cleaned them I first put "on them a pinch of salt, and then I put them in my little "refrigerator,' as I call it. You see, here it is; there is a "beautiful cool spring right here in this 'Grotto,' as I call it. "Well, I have made a little box, as it were, around the spring "and I call it my 'refrigerator.' Ha! ha! ha!

"Now, there's no trouble in toasting a trout after it has "been cleaned. All you do is to put your toasting-fork into "its plump sides in this way and then hold it over the hot "coals in this way. You see, the fork has a long handle, and "you cannot burn your hands. Now, having cooked that "side, you simply turn your trout this way and cook the other "side. You see it only takes a very short time to toast a "good-sized trout if you have good red coals. Now here "are six nice toasted trout. I will put them down here to "keep warm while I toast some bread to eat with them. That "operation won't take long. Now here we are. Please have "a trout, gentlemen. To my mind, there's nothing nicer "than a speckled trout, nicely toasted—eaten with toasted "bread. One reason why I like these quarters is that I can "always get as many trout as I need for my use, and without "any trouble or difficulty; and within a 'stone's throw,' as "one might say, from my 'front door'—that is, if I had a

"front door, which I have not. I suppose if the beautiful "little mountain streams which abound in this neighborhood "were within easy walking or even driving distance of "Mieauburg or any of the towns or villages they would be "speedily 'fished out,' as the saying is. But it is quite a "little jaunt to reach here, and so the beautiful trout fairly "swarm in the streams round here; no trouble at all in catching them. Do take another. I broiled half a dozen; that "would allow a couple each, wouldn't it? * * * Now, "whilst I wash the dishes please take out your pipes and "smoke your pipes. No, I really don't need any help; but "if you insist on helping me, you can wipe the dishes dry "with these tea towels, whilst I wash them. Yes, that's the "way. First-rate. Now I'll put the 'tea things' away and "make up your beds and then I'll throw two or three logs or "old roots on the fire. You see I always keep a supply of "logs or old roots in the 'grotto,' so that I'll have them on "hand; of a chilly evening a little fire is so nice, isn't it?" * * * "Now all my chores are done, and I'll light my pipe, "too. I do like a real good smoke, and I think one enjoys a "smoke better when he lies lazily in front of a fire of logs "like this than he can under any other circumstances. Don't "you? Why, yes, of course. Getting sleepy, are you? Don't "apologize. I know there's nothing like a smoke in front of "a log fire to make one sleepy, especially if he has just enjoyed his supper, and especially if he has been traveling a "long distance in the open air. Fast asleep! Why, so they "are; both of 'em! Well, well, I'm glad they came. I like "their looks. We'll have a long chat to-morrow. Oh, my, "I feel so sleepy myself. Just like an owl. Good-night, "everybody."

As the tired travelers fell asleep on their fragrant beds they noticed with drowsy eyes the figure of their genial host as he put a great big log—big enough to be a "Yule Log"—on the glowing fire, and as he carefully drew the brands and coals together for the night.

The tired guests slept soundly and restfully on their fragrant couches, and did not wake until late next morning. The Sieur was the first one to open his eyes, and at first, of

course, he did not remember where he was, and lay on his bed indolently staring at the arched roof of the cavern and the walls and at the distant daylight streaming in at the entrance of the Grotto. Then he noticed the figure of their host, who was already dressed and who had just built up the fire again and replenished it with wood. And then he remembered where he was and all the incidents of the previous day.

"Good-morrow, my friend," called out the Sieur.

"And it is a good Morrow," answered the Sage. "Never was a brighter day; never a more glorious day in June. The storm we had yesterday evening was just one of those summer storms of which we mountain dwellers get so many. I don't know how it is, except, perhaps, that we live nearer to the storm-clouds. I would not wonder but away down in the plains round the Capital and in the Capital-City itself there was no rain at all; nay, maybe the sun itself may have been shining brightly as ever, and the burghers of the city may have looked towards the Blue Mountains and noticed the dark clouds or mist resting on their summit and said one to another, 'I guess it may be raining on the hills to-day.'"

"It is very much the same way where I live," said the Sieur. "I also am a mountain-dweller; that is, when I am at home, and I would not wish to live anywhere else."

"Nor I," came from the other couch where Machelle was lazily reclining.

"Are you awake, comrade?" asked the Sieur.

"Well, I guess so," answered his friend. "I have been lazily lying here listening to you gentlemen so learnedly discussing the storm business. But are you going a-fishing, 'Mr. Oscar? And can we go, too?'" Machelle asked this question because he noticed their host had taken down from the wall a fishing rod.

"Why, yes; both of you, if you like. Let us go and catch a trout or two for breakfast. They should bite well after the rain. They will be on the lookout for worms and flies and all sorts of food this morning, and will be feeling ready for their breakfast. I have only one fishing-rod, which I

"will be glad to lend to one of you gentlemen. But I have several hooks and lines, and can easily cut a couple of poles for the other two of us, so we will make out all right."

When the visitors emerged from the Grotto door into the bright sunlight of that beautiful June day they found their genial host had not been too enthusiastic in his description of the beauties of the day: "Never was a brighter day—never a more glorious day in June."

The air was pure and fresh and exhilarating, the sky was of that ethereal blue so dear to the Lover of Nature; in the branches of the trees the thrushes or robins were merrily singing. Far overhead the big Eagles were lazily sauntering with almost idle pinions as though they were enjoying a delightful sun-bath; lower down and nearer the earth some younger eagles—the "babies" of the tribe—were gayly circling around, chasing one another and practicing themselves in the fine art of flying like an Eagle.

The genial Sage took the visitors to a place where he said bait could easily be found. It was a little piece of black, loamy ground near the bank of the nearest stream, and here they easily procured all the angle-worms they required.

Within half an hour from the time they left the Grotto they had placed in their joint basket a dozen fine large fish. With these they returned home and in a few minutes a sumptuous repast was before the fishermen.

After the guests had assisted their host in washing and putting away the breakfast dishes—they had insisted on taking an equal part in the household work during the time of their visit—the Sage said:

"Now, if you gentlemen will fill your pipes I will take you over to my *Atelier* and show you where I work."

This proposition being readily assented to, their host conducted the visitors along a little well-used path leading from the mouth of the Cavern and winding through the woods along the bank of the little stream in which the travelers and their host had fished that morning. Five minutes' walk brought them to a pretty little log hut or cottage built of cedar logs. In front was a pretty little "stoop" or porch

and several pretty little flower beds in front and at the sides gave the place a very home-like appearance.

"Why, man," said the Sieur, "whose pretty little cottage is this?"

"I rather think it is mine," said the Sage. At any rate, I "paid for the building of it, and I have the key of the front "door in my pocket; and I believe the lawyers do say, don't "they, that the key to a house is nine points of the law, or "something like that, anyway."

"I rather think," said the Sieur, "that the expression is "generally put a little differently: 'Possession is nine-tenths "of the law.' However, the meaning is practically the "same. You have the key, and the key generally goes along "with the possession, and the possession generally goes along "with the key."

"Ha! ha! ha!" merrily laughed the Sage, as he unlocked the front door and ushered in his guests.

"What bothers me," said Machelle, "is why you don't live "here altogether. This is an ideal cottage; really a lovely "spot. The Grotto, of course, is picturesque and romantic "in both the positive and the comparative degree, but this "transcends it altogether and is superlatively picturesque "and romantic to the third degree."

"Here, here, Machelle, that is really an eloquent little "speech," said the Sieur.

"I think so, too," said their host. "That is, I agree the "little speech just delivered was really eloquent, and I also "agree that this little *Atelier* or workshop is in appearance "more romantic and picturesque than 'the Grotto,' as I style "the Cavern. But then, you see, I have lived in the Cavern "a good many years and have really become attached to it. "When one lives in the same place a long time he gets to "look upon it as 'Home,' be it a Brownstone-Front-Mansion "on the 'Big Square' in Mieauburg, the Capital, a Shepherd's "Hut in the Mountains or a Hermit's Cavern-Grotto on the "Height of Land."

"Here! here!" came spontaneously from the lips of the visitors.

"Some three or four years ago the thought came to me

"that, as there was such an abundance of beautiful cedar in this neighborhood, and as I had the means to spare, I might as well indulge the whim I have had for some years to live part of my time, at any rate, in a cedar-log house. I just love the smell of cedar; it is so fragrant. So I journeyed down to the nearest 'settlement' and employed a sufficient force of men to hew the cedars and put them in place and a couple of good 'kyarpinters' to finish off the inside. The expense was not a great deal, and it is really a pretty little workshop, and I like the change. After breakfast I light my pipe and walk over here and work until noon, and then I go to the Grotto for Lunch. Then I take a couple of hours' sleep; then I return here and work until dinner time. That is my usual routine. Of course I vary it sometimes. Once in a while I 'take half a day off,' as the saying is, to work in my little flower beds here, or in my vegetable garden behind this cottage, which you have not yet seen; and then sometimes I take an hour or two to secure a rabbit or two, or rather, perhaps, I should say, a hare or two, because I am told the variety we have is really of the latter, and not the former, species."

"How do you catch them, my friend?" asked the Sieur.

"Oh, I set snares in likely places. There are some cedar swamps here and there in the neighborhood, and you can generally count on getting one or two hares if you set your snares in a cedar swamp.

"But here we are in my workshop. I am not sure that I can find you each a chair; but—yes, I can. Here they are. Please sit down and make yourselves at home."

The guests did as they were requested. The room in which they found themselves was well lined with books—shelf after shelf all well filled; and the literature was of all kinds. The sage was, by the way, a noted Book Connoisseur and his library contained several very rare and valuable volumes. On the walls were several valuable maps—geographical and geological—and on a large table were a couple of beautiful "Globes."

The particular table at which the Sage generally worked

was littered with MS. and papers and memoranda of one kind and another.

"This is my 'work room,'" said the Sage; "but, of course, "I will not work to-day. I have the honour to have 'com- "pany,' and to-day shall not only be marked as a day of "recreation, but as a 'red letter' day, as the saying is. I just "brought you here to show you my *Atelier*; that was all. I "will now take you to my vegetable garden, so that you can "admire it, if you see fit. After that I will conduct you to "some of the most picturesque sights in this truly romantic "and picturesque neighborhood." And their host rose to conduct his visitors on their further tour of inspection.

But the Sieur remained seated as he said: "Pardon us, "our genial host, a few moments. Would you please be "seated whilst I endeavour to explain to you the reason why "we have come to visit your Mountain Home and whilst I "ask the benefit of your advice and suggestions concerning a "matter of very grave importance."

"Certainly, gentlemen," answered their host, again seating himself. "I will be happy if I can be of any assistance to "you." And then he waited for the Sieur to proceed.

"The matter concerning which I am about to seek your ad- "vice is not only a matter of grave and deep importance—it "is a matter of National and State importance."

"'National and State importance'?" repeated their host. "Yes," answered the Sieur. "Perhaps I should premise "by saying that, although my friend and myself probably are "not much to look at," as the saying is, we are, for all that

"'Ministers Plenipotentiary and Ambassadors Extraordi- "nary.'"

"'Ministers Plenipotentiary and Ambassadors Extraordi- "nary'?" repeated their wondering host.

"Yes. You see before you, Sage Oscar, a certain humble "member of the Noble and Hereditary House of Sieurs, and "a certain Sessional Writer attached to that honourable "House, who have been elected and appointed by the unani- "mous Resolution and vote of each of the two Houses of "Parliament of this fair Land, to do—what, Machelle?"

The Sessional Writer answered dreamily and as if he were

reading something from a piece of paper or from one of the Sessional Papers of the Noble and Hereditary House of Sieurs:

“To proceed without the Realm and there to elect and choose and make choice of a faire Ladie or a Brunette Ladie as the Queen of the Land of the Grimalkins, and having elected and chosen and made choice of the Faire or Brunette Ladie aforesaid, to lead and conduct her—her consent justly being thereunto obtained—to the Throne of the Land aforesaid amid the plaudits of a happy People.”

“Well, well, well! You don’t say!” exclaimed the astonished Sage.

“What a capital memory you have, Machelle. You have ‘got it ‘pat,’ as the saying is. That comes of being a Sessional Writer to the Noble and Hereditary House of Sieurs.”

“But, gentlemen,” asked the astonished host, “what about His Royal Majesty, my friend, King Grimalkin the First?”

“Well, you must know, our courteous host,” answered the Sieur, “that the above Resolution was passed by both Houses at the express request of His Majesty.”

“You don’t say so!” ejaculated the astonished Sage.

“The fact is, my friend and host, the King for some time has had it in his mind to resign the Throne and the Crown and the place on the Yens and Postage Stamps of the Realm which he has filled so ably and so well. Two reasons have led him to this conclusion: he really thinks the Land should be ruled by a Queen instead of by a King; and secondly, he wishes to become a Sheep Rancher and, to use his own words, ‘to tend my sheep on the Blue Mountains.’”

“Well, well! ‘wonders will never cease,’ as the saying is,” exclaimed the Sage.

“Perhaps I should explain that for some years His Majesty has been in the habit of spending a good deal of his time—in fact, as much of it as he could spare from his state and official duties—as a welcome visitor between the homes of M. Machelle and myself. You see, Sage Oscar, my friend and myself, like you, are mountaineers, only we are not Sages or Philosophers; we are simply Sheep Ranchers ‘on the Blue Mountains, ‘the Backbone Range,’ as it is called

"I believe, on the official maps—back of the rising City of "Catburg. By the way, we live on the very same mountains "as you do, only the part of the Range in which our Ranches "are situate is a good deal south, or south by east of this part "of the Blue Mountains; but it is, doubtless, the very same "Range, and we also live on the 'Height of Land,' or pretty "near it. In fact, to speak scientifically and geographically, "we live in about the same altitude as you do. Well, His "Majesty just loves to come out to 'the Mountains' and to "breathe the 'free, fresh air'—the lovely 'Ozone'—which "only, perhaps, can be breathed at this altitude. He loves to "come and he hates to depart, so to speak. When he is home "at his Capital City of Mieauburg his thoughts are frequently "with us. His heart is in the Blue Mountains, so to speak. "He gazes pensively from the spacious verandahs which "adorn his stately Palace on the easterly side thereof at the "dim and distant blue outline of the lovely Blue Mountains "as they rise to the sky. And as he walks along the street, "yelept 'Bay street'—you know the street, Sage, the one "which runs along by the bank of the classic Cattawaul—his "eyes travel eastward and he thinks, ever and anon, that he "can make out the faint outline of the blue smoke from some "new settler's brush pile or 'fallow' as it lazily meanders up "to the sky, and maybe he even imagines that his nostrils can "even detect—although at such a long distance—the fragrant "smell so dear to the heart of everyone who loves the wild "woods, of burning brush and brands. His Majesty has "many a time accompanied Machelle and myself along the "banks of the picturesque little streams which meander down "the mountain sides; in fact, he generally has 'waded' the "streams with us. Like each of us here present, Sage, His "Majesty loves Nature in her wildest haunts. He has the "heart of a Poet. Can you wonder at his wish to live the "life of a Sheep Rancher on the Blue Mountains?"

"No, not at all," answered their host.

"Well, 'to make a long story short,' as the saying is, the "King has resigned, his resignation to take effect at the ex- "piration of three months from the night when he gave the

"requisite notice to the Assembled Houses of Parliament.
"What night was it, Machelle?"

"Thursday, the tenth day of June, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-one," solemnly answered the Sessional Writer, as if he were reading from a paper before him, perhaps a Sessional Paper.

"Thank you, Mr. Sessional Writer," said the Sieur. "Of course it is understood that if we find a Queen and lead her to the Throne before the three months have expired, His Majesty will resign earlier, so that there will be no delay in the Coronation Ceremony, if we can only find the Faire or 'Brunette Ladye required. When the King accepted office, several years ago, it was on the distinct understanding that he could resign at any time on giving to the Houses of Parliament three months' notice of his wish and intention so to do. It was also expressly agreed and understood that the retiring Monarch should have the right to name his successor in office, subject, of course, to the approval of both Houses, so it is recorded in 'Hausard,' and, therefore, must be true."

"Yes, I remember the circumstances," answered the Sage. "The fact is, I am glad to say, and have the honour to say, 'I know His Royal Majesty very well; in fact, we are personal friends. We were fellow-students together at the 'University of Mieauburg several years ago. After our graduation, our baccalameation, so to speak, our 'Artium 'Baccalameus' remained in the Capital to fill his country's Throne and to wear his country's Crown and to occupy a distinguished place on the Yens and Postage Stamps of his country. The other Bachelor is your humble servant, a simple 'Hermit of the Mountains.'"

"His Majesty told us of the great and old-time friendship which has existed between you," said the Sieur, "and therefore he suggested we come and lay the matter before you and ask your advice. In our hurry we came away without a formal Letter of Introduction, and therefore we do not come, perhaps, as duly and properly 'accredited' as becoming Ministers Plenipotentiary and Ambassadors Extraordinary."

"You are as heartily welcome, messieurs, as if you brought with you twenty formal Letters of Introduction. Surely one Mountaineer does not need a formal Letter of Introduction introducing him to another Mountaineer; nor does one honest man need a formal Letter of Introduction introducing him to another honest man. But there are one or two things I do not understand: There are surely hundreds, perhaps thousands, of both Faire and Brunette Queens in this Fair Land—Queens of the Household, Queens of Hearts, uncrowned Queens, any one of whom could be capable of filling the vacant Throne and wearing the vacant Crown and occupying the vacant place on the Yens and the Postage Stamps with honour to herself and credit to her high office and to the fair Land of the Grimalkins. Why should search be made without the Land at all? That is Query number one. Queery number two is this: how, or, perhaps, rather, why, does the power of appointment come to be vested in you two gentlemen? Of course you will understand I am not in any way reflecting on your capability properly and fitly to fulfill the duties thus thrust upon you, as it were. And I am sure the great honour and the responsible trust could not have been conferred upon or vested in better or more competent Trustees—"(here, of course, each of the Ministers Plenipotentiary and Ambassadors Extraordinary rose from their seats and bowed low). "What I mean to imply is, that His Majesty probably might have seen his way clear to have himself named and nominated his own faire or brunette successor."

"My friend," answered the Sieur, "as to your first Query—the fact of your putting it and the eloquent and poetical way in which you put it, show that you are a gallant gentleman and a patriotic citizen of this Fair Land, as well as a learned Philosopher and Sage. The only answer I can give is the self-same one His Majesty gave to our mutual friend, Machelle, and also to the assembled members of both Houses of Parliament the other night: If an appointment or election were made within the Land—if the choice fell on some faire or brunette ladye within the Land—dissatisfaction and jealousy might ensue. You can easily see that, as in every

"nome or in nearly every home, in the Land there is some uncrowned Queen; perhaps in a good many homes even more than one. The relatives and friends of the uncrowned Queen who did not receive the appointment might be offended; their feelings might be hurt, as His Majesty "sagely remarked when addressing the Assembled Legislators the other night: 'Only *one* Ladye, whether Faire or 'Brunette, can possibly be chosen,' all the others must be 'left 'at home,' as the saying is."

Here the Sage interrupted, but courteously:

"There is no doubt His Majesty did right. He came to a wise conclusion. I had not sufficiently considered the matter when I asked the Query. I spoke hastily. There is no doubt the King is right. The point seems almost self-evident, as one might say."

"Then, as to your next Query: The King, having come to the conclusion mentioned, had, of necessity, I fancy, to suggest that Ambassadors be appointed or elected and clothed with power to go *without* the Land and make an election and choice. He could not very well go himself. He wished my friend and I to be appointed, I presume, as he was on such terms of intimacy with us. I did not at first think I would care to accept the office, and at first was rather dubious; but the more I thought about the matter, the better I liked it, and I consented to act and to endeavour to do my best. That is all any one can do, eh, Machelle? Both Houses of Parliament greatly honoured us by unanimously endorsing the appointment. They have further pledged themselves by the formal and unanimous Resolution of each House to accept as the Sovereign of the Realm the certain Faire or Brunette Ladye whomsoever she may be upon whom our choice may fall."

"I am sure, my friends, the trust could not have been placed in better or more capable hands," said the learned Sage, and here again each of the Ministers Plenipotentiary and Ambassadors Extraordinary rose from their seats and bowed.

"Now, my friend, I will plunge in '*medias res*,' as is said in very learned books: Why do we come here immediately

"on receiving this weighty appointment? Why? Because "His Majesty thought we could not do better, and that was "my own conclusion. I, of course, have known you for some "years past by reputation. There are few in the Land who "have not heard of 'Oscar the Sage,' the 'Hermit of the "Mountains.' The King and I were discussing the best "and the quickest way in which we could get without the "Land. The thought occurred to me that, although our fore- "fathers, the early settlers in the land, came from 'way down "south,' from 'the furthest end,' and from the far off Cat- "burg and the southern Isles of the Sea; that, although our "legendary history tells us our forefathers wearily traveled "from the south, following the route of the classic Catta- "waul; yet, surely, we might be able to find a way without "the Kingdom by journeying *northward*. I mentioned the "matter to the King, and he said he had understood that you "had given the matter some considerable study, and that you "had come to the conclusion that it was extremely likely a "route could be found, if reached for, which would lead "northward. In fact, His Majesty said the last time he saw "you he understood you had about come to the conclusion "that there was a Subterranean Channel or Stream leading "from somewhere in these mountains into Lake Superior. "The King said it might be advisable for us to see you as to "the point and ask you whether you knew of a route by "which we could reach the great North Land. If not, we "perforce will retrace our steps and follow the classic Catta- "waul towards the Great Sea.

"Have I stated the case correctly, M. Machelle?"

"Better than I could have done, mon cher," answered the Sessional Writer.

"Well, gentlemen, it is true that I have given the subject a "good deal of thought, and I certainly had come to the con- "clusion you have mentioned at the time I was speaking to "His Majesty, and to which you have referred. But lately— "in fact, within the last month, I think I have discovered "proof positive on the subject. I will be glad to discuss the "whole matter with you and also to show you the proof—the "evidence—to which I have referred. You see, gentlemen,

"it is a pretty large subject. No one can speak positively concerning the matter. We can only draw certain inferences from certain facts; certain deductions from certain proved premises, to speak learnedly.

"Perhaps I should say, at the outset, that some weeks ago I discovered a Subterranean Stream or Channel; in fact, "what seems a large underground River—"

"You don't say so?" exclaimed his astonished auditors. "Where? Do tell us."

"This Subterranean Channel," continued the Sage, "is situate not more than ten minutes' walk from this very room. In other words, within ten minutes I can take you to one of the banks of this underground River. You reach it by following a large Cave or Cavern to its end. I found the entrance to this Cave last fall, but I never explored its recesses until this spring, when, to my great surprise, I found that at the further end there was a large stream of water—in fact, a large River. Of course it is dark in the cave, and it is harder to explore the River than if it were out in the open. One has to take a lantern with him, and exploring in the dark with a lantern is slow work."

"Almost impossible, I should say," exclaimed the Sieur.

"So I should think," said M. Machelle.

But even by lantern light I have been enabled, I think, to discover almost positive proof that this River comes from some country probably far to the northward, where the same kind of timber grows as we find in these very mountains."

Then going to a corner of the room, the Sage lifted up a little branch of a tree, and handing it to his two visitors, said: "From what kind of a tree did this come?"

The two visitors at once pronounced the little branch as part of a Balsam tree.

"And what is this?" said the Sage, producing for their inspection another little branch.

"There is no doubt it came from a spruce tree," said the Sieur.

"I fancy you are right," said Machelle. "I would also call it spruce."

"Then what is this?" said the Sage, producing another little branch.

"I would say it was the hard maple, the 'sugar maple,' as it 'is sometimes called," said Machelle after examining it closely.

"I think there is no doubt as to that," said the Sieur.

"And, once more, what kind of a tree think you bore this 'branch?'" said the Sage, producing still another branch.

"I would say it was very probably Birch—either red or 'black,'" said the Sieur.

"I think so, too," said Machelle; "but where did you get 'them?'"

"These are branches which have come floating down the "Subterranean Stream probably within the last few days; at "any rate, I have within the last week picked them up on the "shore or bank. But there is a fifth branch somewhere. "Oh, here it is. What tree produced this, gentlemen?"

The visitors at once said it was a bough or branch from a cedar tree.

"Well, then, gentlemen, is it not reasonable to believe "that this Subterranean Channel comes from a Land where "the Balsam, the Spruce, the Maple, the Birch and the Cedar "grow? Or perhaps I should put the proposition this way: "Is it not reasonable to suppose that this Subterranean "Stream flows from Lake Superior and that it has borne "hither branches of trees which grow on the shores of that "great Inland Sea, or which, perhaps, have grown in the "country inland from that Lake, but which have fallen into "some stream or river flowing into it, and have been carried "down to the Lake and thence have reached the waters of the "Subterranean Channel?*

*A very interesting account concerning the various trees which grow in that vast extent of country lying to the north of Lakes Superior and Huron, and the River St. Mary, and now commencing to be popularly known as "New Ontario," appeared some time ago in an ably-compiled Pamphlet or Blue Book issued by the Department of Crown Lands for the Province of Ontario (Toronto). This Pamphlet is entitled "Northern Districts of Ontario." I saw what I presume may be a later edition recently, and it does not appear to contain the same interesting matter concerning the trees of "New Ontario" as did the first edition. But the matter to which I have referred was copied into another pamphlet entitled "East Algoma," which can also, I presume, be obtained from the same Department. If the "gentle reader" is interested in the subject of trees—if he loves the wild woods and "the Forest Primeval," he should write to the Department men-

"Am I reasoning close enough, or am I taking anything for granted which has not been proved and which, therefore, cannot be said to be a premise or foundation for my argument, to speak learnedly?"

"I think your reasoning is clear and lucid, or, as the common saying is, 'as clear as mud,'" answered the jovial Sieur.

"I think it is far clearer than mud generally is," said M. Machelle.

The Sage laughed and proceeded: "As far as I can learn from a study of the maps, and from what I have read, I would think the people who live on the shores of Lake Superior, or near those shores—and I think we can safely conclude people do live there—live in just about the same latitude as we do. For that matter there may be mountains there also; perhaps, for all we know, there may be a continuation of this very Range of Hills, only you may not hear it there called 'the Backbone Range' or 'the Blue Mountains.'"

All three were silent for a few moments. Then the Sieur said:

"Do we understand you to say that the stream flows down this way?"

"Certainly," answered the Sage; "how else would the branches have come down here?"

"That's so," said Machelle and the Sieur together.

"Then," said the Sieur, "the only way to find out all about it will be for some one to make a 'voyage of discovery' up stream. Now, if Machelle is agreeable, we will make a 'Voyage of Discovery' up that wonderful stream and so try "and get without the Realm in that way."

tioned for copies of the two Pamphlets referred to, and between them he will find some interesting information concerning the forest wealth of the country lying to the north of the Great Lakes—Superior and Huron—and the River St. Mary.

By the way, I recently heard the interesting statement made by a clergyman that the maple of Canada is the very same tree as the sycamore tree of which we read in Holy Scripture.

The maple tree of Canada is indeed a beautiful tree. And it is so beloved by Canadians that they have taken its leaf—"the Maple Leaf forever," as the song says—as their national emblem (accompanied, of course, by the pretty Beaver). My clerical friend seemed sure as to the statement he made. If he is correct, it is indeed a beautiful thought that the sycamore tree referred to in Holy Scripture is the self-same tree as the maple we love so well—the Acer.

"I don't know whether it is quite practicable, old man," answered Machelle. "If one could see where he was going "it would be all right—if one could travel by daylight; but I "don't like the idea of exploring an unknown River at night, "or rather in darkness, for I presume it is dark by day as "well as by night there."

"We would not be in the dark, mon cher. We would "take along with us a Lantern, or even a couple of Lanterns, "and a supply of coal oil."

"How would you propose to travel, old man?" asked Machelle. "By stage coach, 'wood scow' or 'stone-hooker'?"

"By neither of those modes of conveyance," answered the Sieur. "My idea would be to buy or have made a good "birch-bark canoe, and we would paddle up stream. If after "paddling a certain number of hours we did not come out "into Lake Superior, or if we thought it best to return, we "would retrace our steps, and, having the current with us, "we could easily do that."

Then the Sieur, addressing the Sage, said: "Do you "think the current is a very strong one? Would we find it "difficult paddling up stream?"

"No, the current is slow; not swift enough to make paddling against it difficult."

Then the Sage continued: "If you really wish to try the "experiment, I can lend you a good Birch-Bark Canoe. I "had it made for use on the 'Chain of Lakes' which commence three or four miles northwesterly from here."

"Thanks very much," said the Sieur. "What about coal "oil? Can you lend us a lantern and a can containing a "supply of, say a gallon?"

"Yes—certainly—I buy my coal oil by the barrel and I "have about half a barrel full in the storehouse."

"Thanks, ever so much," said the Sieur. "What do you "say, Machelle?"

"I also say—thanks, ever so much," answered the Ses-sional Writer.

"Yes, we knew you would. But what about our journey "in search of a Queen? Will you be ready to start at eight "sharp to-morrow morning or will that be too early?"

"I am, I believe, one of the joint Ministers Plenipotentiary and Ambassadors Extraordinary," answered Machelle, with a laugh; "it is a joint affair. You can not get on at all without me, you see. The choice and election has to be unanimous. If you paddle away up to Lake Superior alone and if you choose and elect in that far northern country a Ladye—be she Faire or Brunette—and even if you bring her back with you—I might not be pleased with your choice and you might have to paddle up stream again with your chosen Queen. No—I can't say that I like going on Voyages of Discovery which have to be made in the dark or by the dim light of a Lantern. But it is certainly an Adventure, and we started out in search of Adventures as well as of a Queen—and so—take it all round—I'm with you, old man—and I'm ready to start either now or at eight a. m. to-morrow."

"That's bravely and gallantly spoken, old fellow," said the Sieur rising and clasping Machelle's hand. "But do you know, Mr. Sesional Writer, you are getting to be quite a speaker—really an eloquent speaker—since we started out on this romantic and picturesque expedition. If you keep on improving we must really 'run' you for our 'Candidate' at the next General Election in our 'Riding.' What do they call our District for Election purposes, Machelle? The Politicians have so 'gerrymandered' the country—as the saying is—that one cannot keep track of the name of the 'Riding' in which he is supposed to have a 'Vote and Influence!'"

"Catalinha," answered Machelle.

"Right you are, sir: Catalinha it is—or rather, she am. If you keep on practicing 'stump speaking' we will certainly 'run' you for Catalinha one of these days."

"Well," said the Sage, "these little preliminaries having been so satisfactorily arranged, let me show you gentle-men my vegetable garden, and then let us go and look up the Birch Bark canoe and get everything in 'ship shape'—as the saying is—for your departure on your so-adventurous 'Voyage of Discovery!'"

And the two visitors rose and followed their courteous

host out through the back door of the cedar-log cottage and into the neatly-kept vegetable garden in the rear. Here the guests were shown certain beds which were the particular pride of the Sage, and in the preparation and care of which he had spent many hours of pleasant toil.

"You see, my friends," he explained, "I always had a *penchant* for gardening, and as I have an abundance of 'time on my hands'—as the saying is—I have found a pleasure in looking after such things as lettuce and radishes and early carrots, asparagus, spinach, parsnips and other plants which you see here."

"You certainly seem to understand the art of gardening, Sage Oscar, and it certainly is one of 'the Fine Arts,'" answered the Sieur.

And then coming to a rustic seat which was placed under a beautiful maple at one end of the garden, they sat down and enjoyed the pleasant view of the pretty little garden and the picturesque cedar-log cottage.

"There is one thing I would like to mention—if you won't be offended, Sage Oscar," said the Sieur, after a few minutes silence, "or rather, there is one question I would, 'with your permission, like to ask."

"Proceed, my friend," said the Sage.

"That is really a beautiful little cottage—I agree with you as to your love of the cedar logs—and I hope one of these days to put up on my own Ranch a similar little cottage. The wish has been in my heart for some time to have a house built of cedar logs—and since I have seen this lovely little house my wish has taken definite form, and if I come back safely from my journey to Lake Superior, I hope soon to have such a house erected on my own little *demesne*."

"And I, too, on mine," said Machelle. "It is a charming idea; even if we have gained nothing else—or do gain nothing else—from our present Adventure, we have got an idea which is well worth the carrying home."

"Now, Sage Oscar," pursued the Sieur, smiling kindly at M. Machelle, "with this little preamble or introduction, I will proceed to put my query: For whom are the vacant

"rooms in the cottage intended? You only occupy one room
"—your study or *atelier* or workroom—what about the
"others?"

Before the Sage could reply, M. Machelle interjected: "Let me answer for the Sage: 'I am also living in the expectation of finding a Queen. Some day the Queen will come to her pretty cedar-log cottage.' There, gentlemen," pursued Machelle, "I have answered for our friend. I had also noticed the size of the beautiful cottage and the fact that only one room was occupied. And considering the whole situation—and not forgetting the beautiful flower beds in front of the cottage and at the sides—I came to the poetical and romantic idea which I have put into words, or rather into the mouth of our friend and host, and for which I beg pardon if I have in any way spoken amiss."

"Gallantly and eloquently spoken, my friend and fellow 'sheep-rancher,' said the Sieur—"but really, Machelle, you are growing so eloquent on this journey that we shall have to 'run' you—as the saying is—for the Constituency of Catalinha at the first opportunity. Such eloquence should not be 'wasted on the desert air'—as the poet says; it should be printed in the newspapers and preserved by 'the art 'preservative' on the pages of 'Hausard'."

"You are full of fun, gentlemen, and I am sure your little 'pleasantries' are well and kindly meant."

This was all the reply the Sage made with reference to the romantic and poetical idea broached by Machelle—and so for the present neither of the visitors referred further to the subject—for fear of offending their host.

The Sieur, however, proceeded: "Do you know, gentlemen, there is another idea or thought which has come into my mind within the last few days—and since I have seen this romantic and picturesque spot in which our friend has made his home, the idea and thought has assumed a more definite outline or plan and has, in fact—as it were—become a purpose."

"What is it?" asked his two auditors almost "uno flatu"—as the saying is.

"It has seemed to me that we are all far too *selfish*—I

"mean thoughtlessly selfish. Now—speaking for myself—I love the inmost recesses of the forest—the depths of 'the Forest primeval'—I love nature in her wildest moods—and in her wildest haunts. I love the murmuring brook, the shady nook under the forest trees, the rustic waterfall, the sequestered glades, the valleys, the mountains; in fact, I, too, have the heart—at least I feel I have—if not of a Poet, at any rate the heart of one who can *feel* and *appreciate* the Poetry there is in nature in her wildest moods and in her wildest haunts.

"Now, this being the fact—why should I keep the enjoyment to myself? The thought never occurred to me until lately; but there are dozens—hundreds—of *tired-out mothers* and *drooping little children* in our three large towns—embryo cities—and *tired-out men*, too—who would enjoy so much a day or two—even one single day—spent in a place like this!"

"That's so," said Machelle; "it never occurred to me."

"Nor to me either, old man," said the Sage; then he added, taking his friend's hand warmly in his, "I thank you, my friend; I certainly will profit by the suggestion—and I hope in some way some one at least may be made happier through the words you have said."

"I am so glad you fellows take my suggestion so kindly," pursued the Sieur; "the idea has come to me that when I go back—if I return safely from this lantern-light journey of exploration—I will discuss the matter with our mutual friend, King Grimalkin the First. He is also a lover of nature in her wildest haunts—he intends being a mountaineer—and, as we have lately found out, Machelle, he also loves little children and likes to play with them."

"Yes," said Machelle, "his Majesty is a kind of 'Santa Claus' himself. Oh, the fun we three had along Bay street the other afternoon. I told the King hereafter we would have to call him 'Santa Claus' Partner.'***

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" laughed the Sieur; "I fancy even now some of those youngsters are talking about the recent visit of 'Santa Claus' to Bay street; I think I see them showing

***"Santa Claus' Partner."—Thomas Nelson Page.

"those new bright 'yens' one to the other and saying, 'Santa Claus' gave me this! Ha! Ha! Ha!'"

"Please tell me the story so that I can laugh too," said the Sage.

So—between the two friends—he soon heard the story of the recent occasion when the three child-lovers had meandered along Bay street, holding as they went a little Christmas Pantomime or Children's Matinee in the "leafy month of June."

"That was first rate," said the Sage on the conclusion of the story, "and it was just like His Majesty—he always had a large heart and a warm place in it for the children."

"Now," continued the Sieur—speaking half to himself and half to his two friends—"why should I not for two or "three weeks at least, every summer—after 'fly time' is over, "of course—say after the first week in July—have two or "three little visitors—perhaps one or two of the tired-out "men and women, too—at my Ranch in the Blue Mountains?"

"Hear! Hear!" came from the Sessional Writer—"I will too!"

"And I will take a little journey myself down to the Capital City," said the Sage, and I will see His Majesty and I will ask him to take me with him for a stroll along your Bay street and, between us, we will pick out two or three—"perhaps even half a dozen—little guests to fill the vacant rooms in this cottage for a few days at all events."

"Hear! Hear!" came from the Sessional Writer of the Noble and hereditary House of Sieurs.

The Sieur D'Ulric was too much affected by this warm response to his remarks to be able to speak in reply just then. He simply took the hand of the Sage in his and pressed it warmly.

The Sage continued: "I do not know how to thank you enough, gentlemen, for coming here and gladdening me "with the suggestion you have made. As you have truly "said, 'we are all far too selfish—thoughtlessly selfish.' The "idea never occurred to me and I am afraid it never would "have occurred to me. I thank you so much, Sieur."

"My friend, I tell you, for some time past—as I explained to His Majesty a few days ago—I have been paying more attention to 'the youngsters' than I used to do. And I have had 'any amount of fun'—as the saying is—with the little 'child-acquaintances I have lately made. I tell you, boys, if "you want to have 'real fun'—as the saying is—you must go to 'the youngsters' for it. I have found that children are, 'after all, the best friends and acquaintances one can have "and that they make the best chums. But let us go and see "about that Birch-bark canoe—and the lantern and the coal-oil—if it suits your convenience. I would like to find that Queen as soon as possible."

The next morning at a little after seven the Sage and his two visitors emerged from the Cavern Door—the Sage going first to lead the way, and the visitors following and bearing between them a Birch-Bark Canoe. In this frail craft were deposited a can holding about a gallon of coal-oil—a lantern and a couple of stout paddles; also sufficient food to last the two men, if necessary, a week. The fact is, the Sage and his guests had stayed up until late on the previous evening baking a big batch of bread—large round cakes baked on the hearth. The Sage had laughingly said he hoped he would not have to bake so many loaves at once for quite a long time to come. Through repeated practice he had become quite an expert baker and his large round loaves or cakes baked on the hearth were very palatable—in fact—as the guests said—sweet-eating. In a few minutes the entrance of the Cavern into which they had to take their way was reached, and here the party halted to light their lanterns. I should have said, perhaps, that the Sage carried a lantern with him. Their guide going first and leading the way, the visitors soon reached the bank of the subterranean stream—which flowed through the Cavern at its further end.

It was a weird and picturesque journey through the Cavern until they reached the stream—their guide had apparently often visited the spot and seemed to know the way very well, and the visitors had noticed when going through the woods that some one had recently "blazed" out the trail so as to make it easier to follow.

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When the visitors were in about the center of the Cavern their host stopped them and said "listen!"—and listening intently, they could hear the sound of the water as it flowed down at the further end of the Cavern and as the waves lapped on the shore.

"That's it," said the Sage.

"So I presume," answered the Sieur.

In a few minutes the three men stood on the River Bank holding on high their lanterns and trying to peer as far over the dark waves as possible.

"I presume," said the Sieur, "that out in the open this water is as blue as the limpid waters of the classic Catta-waul; but it is very black-looking here, to be sure."

"Aye—just the colour of ink," said Machelle. "I don't mean 'blue-black ink' but real black ink."

Just then a little branch of a tree came sailing down the River, and with the help of a long pike-pole he had on the bank, the Sage pulled it in. He explained to his visitors that he had brought the pole down there so as to have it convenient for use. The branch proved to be a branch from a mountain ash—no berries, of course, as yet, but in flower.

"There is no doubt in my mind as to the correctness of your conclusions and deductions, Sage Oscar," said the Sieur, "but how long a trip do you think it will be from 'here to Lake Superior'?"

"I cannot say," replied the Sage. "but I have the idea that in less than twenty-four hours and with easy paddling you will emerge into the open sunlight or moonlight or star-light—as the case may be—into the open air on Lake Superior."

"Well, let us launch our frail craft and set off on this most adventurous search for a Queen"—said the Sieur—"but before doing so let us shake hands with you, old man, and hope that every good thing will come to you and nothing evil."

"Aye," said Machelle, "and let us hope that soon that Queen I spoke of will come a-tripping up the mountain sides and a saying, 'Where is that pretty cedar-log cottage I have seen in my dreams?'"

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" laughed the three men, and the vaulted ceiling of the cavern rang and re-echoed with their laughter. The sound was so strange and weird, and it was the first time either of the three men had heard anything like it.

The sound of the "Ha! Ha! Ha!" came echoing back for fully five minutes—from the vaulted roof of the cavern where they stood and from away down the long length of approach through which they had come—and from away up in the River and from away down the River. And just when all had again become quiet and still and nothing could be heard but the lapping of the waves on the shore—again would come from some distant point the weird "Ha! Ha! "Ha!"

During the whole of the time the three men just stood and stared at one another in bewilderment.

Finally the Sieur said, "I never heard the like—that is a wonderful series of Echoes!"

"I never knew there was such an Echo here"—said the Sage. "Of course, I have never laughed aloud here before."

"That is what did it," said Machelle. "Listen! Hullo!—"o!o!o!"

And for fully five minutes the three men stood and listened to the answering "Hullo!o!o!o!" from here and there and all over, as it seemed.

"Well, that is an Adventure to start the day with," said the Sieur. "Let us now proceed to business, gentlemen. "Good-bye, again, old man. You will see us back safe and "sound—and accompanied by a Queen for the fair Land of "the Grimalkins—within a short time, I hope; within a couple of months, at all events. Of course" (this with a jolly laugh), "I cannot set any date for our arrival. You will, "of course, allow Her Majesty—the Queen who is to be—"the use of your Cedar-log Cottage during her brief stay "on the mountains. We will, of course, hurry on to the "Capital as soon as we conveniently can do so. But the "faire Ladye—or the brunette Ladye, which ever it may be—"may perhaps be tired and fatigued after her long jour-ney, and may need a rest before she proceeds to the cere-mony of her Coronation."

"Her Majesty will be welcome, of course to the Cottage whenever she wishes it, and for as long a time as she may wish to use it. I, of course, will be one of her Liege Subjects."

"We will tell her when we find her all about you—and we will assure her of your Loyalty," said Machelle; "but," he added, "the first thing to do is to find the Queen which is "to be, it strikes me. This searching for a Queen may be "a rather more difficult business than at first sight would "appear. And, speaking for myself, I am—or, perhaps, I "should say I mean to be—very particular in the matter of "choosing Queens. My trust does not sit lightly on my "shoulders. The Sieur may find me rather hard to suit—"rather difficult to please—too critical—in fact, hyper-critical!"

"We shall really have to 'run' you for Catalinha when we get back," said the Sieur, with a laugh.

By this time their frail craft was launched, and getting into it, they prepared to start. In the meantime the Sage held the side of the canoe to keep it in position. A little stick or mast had been strongly fastened near the bow, to which the lantern was securely attached, and it threw a bright radiance for several yards around the bow of the canoe. The Sieur took the bow paddle and the Sessional Writer the second paddle.

"Well, I will not say 'Farewell,'" said the Sage; "I will "simply say '*Au Revoir*' and '*Bon Voyage*.' I will not ex- "pect you back for a month, at all events, and during that "month I will go down to the capital and have that little "talk with the King I told you about."

"Yes! yes!" said both the men in the canoe. "Do!"

"When you come back from your so-adventurous journey "you may find some visitors from the city in the Cottage; "but when Her Majesty comes they will be pleased to move "to the Cavern, or to 'camp out'—as the saying is—during "her sojourn with us."

"Of course," said the Sieur.

Then Machelle added: "Please give our kindest regards "to His Majesty King Grimalkin the First. Tell him where "and how you saw us last."

"And tell him," added the Sieur, "we have gone in search of a Queen for the Fair Land of the Grimalkins."

"Yes," answered the Sage; "but one word before I let you go. If you should return earlier—and if you find me away—"go right into possession and make yourselves at home. I "never lock my doors. And now I'll not keep you longer—"except to ask you to make the echoes ring with

"*'Vive la Reine!'*"

And as the vaulted arches and inmost recesses of that Cavern rang and re-echoed as they had never rung or re-echoed before, the Sage gently pushed the Canoe out into the stream—the raised paddles shone for a second in the lantern light, then sunk into the inky-dark waters and the adventurous voyage of Discovery and of Search had fairly begun.

After paddling for about four hours, Machelle said: "Heyo, Comrade, let's halt for Lunch. By my watch, as "far as I can make out by yon dim light on the foremast, it "must be about high twelve, and we started just about eight."

"I'm agreed, old man," said the Sieur; "we'll stop right "here. There's a ledge of rock on which we can lift the "canoe, and we'll have our Lunch and a smoke and then "paddle till dinner time."

The canoe was safely lifted out and carefully deposited on the ledge of rock and the tired Voyageurs enjoyed a hearty Lunch. Then they spread their blankets under them, lit their pipes and stretched out for an hour's lounge and rest.

Said the Sieur between the whiffs of his pipe: "In all my "life I never heard or read of an adventure like this."

"Nor I," said Machelle.

"I am getting used to this Subterranean Stream—in fact, "I am getting to like it," said the Sieur.

"And I," added his friend. "At first it seemed a little bit "too weird and unusual. But, like you, I'm getting used to it "and as long as the lantern burns alright and our provisions "last—and as long as the canoe remains water-tight—I'll "think it fun. But all the same, I would like to see daylight "once more."

"I guess we'll see Lake Superior in a few hours," said the Sieur. "I'm so glad the air is so pure in this cavern."

"So am I," said Machelle: "it is really pure and fresh—I guess it must have come from Lake Superior."

At six o'clock the voyageurs stopped for dinner, and as their second camping place was an extremely desirable one, it was agreed that they should remain there until morning.

Said the Sieur: "You see, we are not used to this paddling business—and I for one am getting a little tired. The exercise is rather out of my usual wont. I guess certain muscles are brought into use in paddling that otherwise often lie dormant."

"That's just what I'm thinking," said Machelle. "I vote that we stay right here, and after dinner wrap our blankets round us and smoke and talk and sleep until daylight—I mean until it would be daylight outside—and then proceed to find that Queen."

"Alright, my friend," said the Sieur.

The canoe was safely deposited on the broad Ledge, and after a hearty dinner the tired Voyageurs wrapped themselves in their blankets, lit their pipes and talked drowsily until in a few minutes they were fast asleep.

At six sharp the next morning they were again under weigh, or under way—whichever is the right expression—and at about eleven o'clock Machelle called his comrade's attention to the fact that it seemed to be getting lighter in the cavern.

"I think so too," said the Sieur, "and have been noticing it for some time. The water is also changing colour. I think, and changing from a black to a 'blue black,' so to speak. I hope soon it will be real blue—like the limpid waters of the now-famous 'Kettlekettle Crick' or the classic 'Cattawaul.'

"Aye, aye, mate," replied Machelle—"but let us stop for luncheon; this is a good place to lay the canoe and we don't find such good places everywhere. We must take good care of our ship."

"Right you are, M. Machelle," said the gallant Sieur.

The travelers were now so anxious to get on with their

journey, that they did not feel like staying long over their Luncheon, and in an hour they were again briskly paddling up stream.

Inside of a couple of hours the Sieur gladly called out: "Hurrah, there's the outlet!"

"Hurrah! Vive La Reine!" cried Machelle.

For some time it had been getting lighter and lighter—and the water was gradually becoming blue in colour. And now not very far in front they could see light ahead—what was apparently the outlet, or rather the inlet, of the subterranean stream up which they had been paddling so many hours. Within an hour the two Voyageurs had reached the inlet, or the outlet, and their light craft came gliding gracefully out of the dim Cavern into the bright sunlight of a June afternoon on Lake Superior. For some time the water had been getting more or less "ruffled," and once the travelers had reached the "Big-Sea-Water"*, they found the water what is technically called "wobbly"—and their canoe began to "wobble." The fact was, a rather stiff "nor-wester" was blowing down the Lake, and out at sea the Voyageurs could see big "white caps."

"Those 'white caps' remind me of the classic Cattawaui "when a strong southerly wind blows," said the Sieur.

"That's about it, I fancy," said Machelle.

"Well, here we are," said the Sieur. "We do not need to "go any further, I guess; not at present anyway. Let's land "and take a walk in the woods to 'stretch our legs'—as the "saying is. I feel very much cramped up—sitting in a canoe "so long, and especially not being used to it, I suppose."

"Say, Sieur, do you notice how 'home-like'—so to speak—"the whole country here looks. The trees are so beautiful—"and look at that Range of Hills—why, it looks just like the "Blue Mountains at home—the Backbone Mountains."

"Well! well! Machelle, I think I understand it all now, "or am commencing to understand: Don't you see the inlet to the Cavern is right there at the very point where "that range of Hills comes down to the Lake Shore?"

"Yes" said Machelle.

***"Gitche Gu'mee—the Big-Sea-Water": "The Song of Hiawatha."—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

"Well, don't you commence to understand it now? Don't you think that probably that subterranean river runs under 'that range—follows along under the Hills?'"

"Perhaps you are right, Sieur; perhaps our Blue Mountains are a continuation of this very Range. At any rate, 'we will mention the matter to the Sage, and let him 'figure 'the matter out'—as the saying is."

"Yes, I will draw a little sketch in my note-book right 'here—or, rather, where we've landed—so that I can show 'it to the Sage when we return."

"I'll do the same, Sieur. The matter is certainly an important one," said the Machelle. "Perhaps when we return, the distinction of 'F. S. S.' may be conferred upon us; 'we certainly may have added somewhat to the geographical lore of the schools."

"Well, as long as we can find the Queen we are all right 'anyway—'F. S. S.' or not, Machelle. Now, here's a good 'place to land; and we can put our Canoe under the spreading branches of yon large red birch tree—or is it a black 'birch?—there's not much difference anyway, I guess."

The voyageurs gently brought up their frail bark to the shelving shore, and at a point where they were glad to notice there was a sandy and not a rocky beach. And here they debarked and stood again on "terra firma"—as the saying is. Then, just as they were about to lift up the canoe, the Sieur noticed the lantern dimly burning at the main mast.

"Ha! Ha! Machelle, I guess we'll 'douche the glim'—as 'the saying is. We surely will not need a light any more 'in the day time."

Machelle laughed and said, "I really love that lantern. We 'could not have got on without it."

The light was extinguished and the frail craft was safely deposited under the spreading branches of the big birch tree.

Then the two voyageurs sat down and carefully drew rough maps or sketches in their note books showing the relative positions, as they understood it, (1) of the entrance or inlet to the Subterranean Channel, (2) "The Big-Sea-Water,"

(3) the Range of Mountains which ran down to the shore of the big Lake and seemed to end there. This being accomplished, the Sieur said, "Now for an early supper! I feel so 'hungry'!"

Machelle said, "All right; come and let us build a fire 'right here on the shore. This is a sheltered place; the 'wind cannot very well reach us here. And then it is always a good idea to build a 'camp fire,' whenever you can, 'in some place like this, where the fire can't 'spread.' The 'shore of a lake or river is generally a good place, if you 'can get a place—like this—which is sheltered from the 'wind."

"Thanks ever so much, my ever-so-thoughtful friend," said the Sieur. "I so much long for a cup of tea. You 'don't know how much I would love just now to drink a 'cup of fragrant tea."

"Well, my friend, if you will assist me in making a fire 'you can have a cup of tea in fifteen minutes. I'm a 'great 'hand'—as the saying is—to get a pot boiling quickly when 'I have a good fire."

Then, as the Sieur and Machelle hurriedly gathered together chips and sticks and got a fire started, Machelle continued:

"What a thoughtful act it was on the part of the Sage to 'put in with our provisions a little packet of black tea, a few 'teaspoonfuls of sugar and a couple of spoons. And he did 'not forget to add a couple of cups and a nice little granite- 'ware tin in which to boil the water. I guess the Sage 'must be used to camping out."

The Sieur added, "There was one thing lacking at all the 'meals which we took whilst journeying through yonder 'Subterranean Channel. They were all enjoyable—thanks 'to the good baking of our late host; but I like a cup of tea, 'and never can think a 'breakfast' is a breakfast, or a 'luncheon' is a luncheon, or a 'dinner' is a dinner, except 'I have a smoking-hot cup of tea."

"I guess you're right, old man," said Machelle, "but there 'was one good thing about our journey up yon Subterranean Channel—there were no mosquitoes or black flies,

"and there are certainly a good many here. I fancy they "are just about the same kind as we have in our own Land. "The mosquito—or 'Miss Kitty,' as some people call the "species—seems to sing about the same tune here as it did "away back at the Sage's home that day when we went fish- "ing before breakfast. It seems a long time ago, but I guess, "strictly speaking, it was only day before yesterday."

The Sieur replied: "Never mind—the flies won't trouble "us when we have once got our camp fire going. And as "this seems a pretty good camping ground, and as I guess "we are both tired after our long paddle, probably we had "better stay here all night and not commence our journey "inland until the morning. Besides, it would be well to "chat over our plans for the future—lay out a 'Plan of Cam- "paign—as the saying is."

"I'm agreed," said Machelle. "Here goes," and he ap- "plied a lighted match to the heap of dry sticks and chips they had gathered, and soon the camp fire was burning mer- rily. Machelle ingeniously rigged up—as he termed it—a simple arrangement for hanging the camp kettle or pot over the fire, and in a very short time the water was boiling. Then the tea was made, and the tired voyageurs thankfully sat down to a most enjoyable meal.

"I see," observed the Sieur, "there are apparently a large "number of wild strawberries in these parts, and they seem "to be ripening well. We might gather a pailful to-morrow."

"I'm agreed," said the Sessional Writer.

After dinner the two men lit their pipes, threw two or three old logs on the camp fire and lay down near it to smoke and chat.

Pretty soon they heard a "Moo-ooh!" and, looking a little up the sandy beach they saw a couple of cows meandering down to the water's edge to take a drink.

"Well, I'm real glad to see those cows," said the Sieur; "it settles one point, anyway."

"What is that?" asked his comrade.

"It shows this part of the country is inhabited. I'll tell "you what we'll do: Let us get up and follow those cows "for a little while. They will probably have a good, well-

"beaten trail, or 'cow-path,' through the woods to their "home, and we'll see where they live when they are 'to "home'—as the saying is—and then to-morrow, after "breakfast, we will call on their owners and begin our "search for a Queen. How does that plan ~~strike~~ you, Ma- "chelle?"

"Very favourably," answered that gentleman, "that is, as "far as I can see at present. We'll follow the 'cow-bossies' "—as the youngsters call them—anyway."

The travelers found—as the Sieur had said was likely—that the cows had a good, well-beaten path which they followed from the Lake inland.

The path was indeed so well beaten that there was little doubt it had been much traveled. It was a pretty "trail" or "cow-path" leading through the great forest primeval. Like most, if not all, "cow-paths," this path was anything but straight—it meandered here and there, winding in and out amongst the beautiful maple and birch trees—the timber in the high lands being, as in the Land from which the voyageurs had come, chiefly of the 'hardwood' variety.

"This is not what you would call a direct road—or a "concession line" or a 'side line'—is it?" asked Machelle, jokingly.

"No, my friend—and it is not what you would call 'a short "cut' either. But you'll find it leads 'home' anyway—that "is, as far as the 'cow bossies' which we are following are "concerned. Ah, here we are!"

The "trail" or "cow path" had gradually been ascending a "grade," and now as the travelers came to the top of a little rise or eminence, they saw nestling in the pretty little valley which lay at their feet the picturesque log house and out-buildings of a farmer—probably the "honest yeoman" who counted the two pretty milch cows amongst his possessions.

"That's all right," said Machelle; "let us go back now and "discuss our plans by the camp fire. We'll come back here "to-morrow morning, I fancy."

So the two men leisurely strolled back along the pretty cow path and soon reached their camp fire again. Then

they re-filled their pipes and threw themselves on the grass before the smouldering logs.

"Now as to our plans, Machelle. I'll unfold to you a little 'Plan of Campaign' which I have roughly sketched out in 'my mind. Only *roughly*, mind you. If the general 'plan' 'meets your approval as an 'outline,' we can easily—be—'tween us—fill in the details and *minutiae* and thus complete the sketch."

"Alright, mon Sieur—go ahead, if you please," said Machelle.

"Now, it has occurred to me that in order quickly to pick out a Queen, we must make what 'politicians' call a 'house 'to house canvass'; in other words, we must pay 'dom—'ciliary visits'—as it were—to as many houses as we can—"we must visit as many houses as we can—"and in as short a time as possible. Now, how are we going to do this? Well, one plan which suggested itself to me "was that we disguise ourselves as strolling tinkers and go "around from house to house a-singing lustily and in a deep "baritone-basso-profundo style of voice:

"'Pots to mend?'

"'Scissors to grind?'

"'Umbrellas to mend?'

"But there were one or two objections to that plan. First "and foremost, I did not know a single thing about the art "of mending either pots or umbrellas. Then as to scissors, "I felt afraid I might spoil them if I attempted to sharpen "them. The fact is, I was afraid I could not be a success as "a strolling tinker. Of course you might understand the "art of mending pots and umbrellas and of grinding scis—sors. You are so skilful at most anything you tackle, old "fellow, that it would not at all surprise me even to learn "you were an expert and adept in the art and handicraft to "which I have referred."

"Not I," said Machelle.

"But anyway I thought it would be more desirable if an "avocation could be picked on and followed in which we "could each distinguish ourselves. Then happily I thought of "the Profession or Avocation of a Strolling Pedlar."

"A strolling pedlar!" dreamily repeated M. Machelle.

"Yes, that's it—capital thought—'happy thought'—as the 'saying is—wasn't it?" enquired the Sieur.

"Please go on and explain—I don't quite see," answered his friend.

"The fact is, mon cher, it is just the vocation, profession "or line of life in which we can greatly distinguish ourselves "and in which we can have lots of fun—and the most im- "portant factor, or perhaps I should say feature, is this: By "following the art or profession lastly named, we can prob- "ably obtain an audience in a less space of time and with a "far greater number of demoiselles—both faire and brunette "—than we otherwise could. Why, we will go through this "whole country a-carrying between us a 'pedlar's pack' con- "taining Ribbons and Laces and a-singing in a deep baritone- "basso-profundo-contralto-alto-soprano-tenor and mezzo- "soprano tone of voice—as it were and so to speak—those so- "beautiful and so-pathetic lines:

"'We've ribbons and laces
"To set off the faces
"Of pretty young sweethearts and wives!'

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" laughed Machelle.

"It is no laughing matter," resumed the Sieur. "You "must remember we not only have within a short time to "see a great many ladies—faire and brunette—but we have "to decide as to their relative merits. Can you think of or "suggest any better method?"

"None! the idea is first-rate in every respect. It, of "course, naturally took me by surprise at first. But I'm al- "ready getting used to the idea—and I feel already that I "like the avocation—in fact that I am rapidly becoming— "as it were—an ornament to the Profession—and I like the "Song of the Order; what were the words again? Oh, yes— "I've got 'em!"

And here the Sessional Writer rose to his feet, bowed to an imaginary audience, placed his right hand over his heart and commenced to sing in a deep falsetto—as it were—voice the words:

"'H. M. S. Pinafore!'"— Gilbert & Sullivan.

“ ‘We’ve Ribbons and Laces
“ ‘To set off the faces
“ ‘Of pretty young Sweethearts and Wives!’ ”

“Well done, indeed, my Fellow-Pedlar,” said the Sieur D’Ulric. “That’s all right. We’ll succeed admirably. “Don’t you see we can travel from house to house and be “a welcome guest in every house—‘high and low’—‘great “and small’—they’ll all welcome the traveling pedlars. We “could not have hit on a happier expedient. *All ladies*—“both faire and brunette—just ‘dote’—as the saying is—on “‘Ribbons and Laces’; and you see we have no idea at all “where we may expect to find our *Queene* who is to be; “perhaps in shepherd’s cot—perhaps in Ancestral Hall—it “matters not; *she’ll* want to see our ‘Ribbons and Laces’ “and so *we’ll* see her. Do you see? Ha! Ha! Ha!” laughed the Sieur. “Ha! Ha! Ha!” laughed his friend in unison.

Then Machelle said in a reflective tone: “There is one “thing though we need; in fact we can’t get on without it.”

“What’s that?” anxiously asked the Sieur.

“A supply of Ribbons and Laces—with which to fill our “‘Pedlar’s Pack’ afore mentioned.”

“That’s right—I have already thought of that,” said the Sieur, looking relieved.

“We brought with us a good supply of ‘Yens.’ What “we’ll do will be to find out the name and address of the “nearest dealer in such articles—make straight for his store “or shop, and fill up our ‘pack’ or valise—by the way, we’ll “also have to buy one;—then we’re ready to sing our pretty “little Song and to commence active business. We’ll sell “our merchandise very cheap, Machelle. ‘Small Profits and “‘Quick Returns’ had better be our motto.”

“Sartainly,” answered the Sessional Writer. “We’ll “meander down the valley—first thing in the morning and “interview the owner of those two ‘cow bossies.’ We’ll find “on the road to the nearest dealer in Ribbons and Laces, “and then we’ll ‘make tracks,’ as the saying is. We won’t “‘let the grass grow under our feet,’ as another saying is; “will we, Mate?”

“No sir,” said the Sieur. “Now let us put an extra Log

"or two on this fire and get to sleep. It may turn a little chilly 'fore morning, especially as the wind is from a cold quarter."

Inside of ten minutes each of the tired Voyageurs was in the "Land of Nod"—wherever that may be, and sleeping soundly.

About five o'clock next morning Machelle lazily half opened his eyes, and at first did not remember where he was. He looked up dreamily at the specks of blue sky, which he could see here and there through the branches of the maple tree under which the tired men had slept; and then he looked out on the "Big Sea-Water," which now was so calm that it had "never a ripple"—as the saying is—in fact, it lay there so still that one might almost have taken it for a "sea of glass"—that is, a beautiful blue-tinted glass; and then he lazily looked at the emouldering fire; then at the recumbent form of the Sieur, who, wrapped in his blankets, still slept peacefully. By this time Machelle had remembered where he was and all the incidents of the previous day had come back to his recollection.

He lazily rose and yawned and stretched himself; then he called out cheerily: "Hey O, Mon Sieur Reveillez!"

As the Sieur lazily awoke and stretched himself his friend continued:

"Come in for a plunge! I do long to take a 'header' once more. The sight of that beautiful blue water reminds me of the little inland Lake on my Ranch. You know it lies pretty close to our house, and some years ago we put up a little bath house on its bank, just at a place where the water is deep enough for a plunge, and in I go for a 'header' every morning afore breakfast—except, of course, in winter—then I perforse take a sponge bath at home."

"Right you are, old man," said the Sieur; "when we get back to the fair Land of the Grimalkins and to the Blue Mountains, you must come over and see the little Lake or pond which I have had made right near our home on the now-famous Kettlekittle Crick. You know I have always wished I had a pretty little Lake on my Ranch, such as you have, and so I thought out a proposition in Civil Engineering. The banks of the classic Kettlekittle at one place

"on our ranch are high—and so a dam or back-water could easily be constructed at that point. It's not more than one hundred yards from our front door—isn't that lovely? Says 'I to myself, says I, 'to be sure there is not much water in "the Crick" on your place as it is so near the "fountain-head." You know it rises in that springy spot—a kind of cedar swamp—just about on my north line—but it is a never failing "Crick"—there is always *some* water running in the stream even in the dryest part of the summer—although, by the way, Machelle, I have seen so little water in the dry season that one would almost think a very thirsty cow could drink up the stream—so to speak—but of course after the cow had drunk up the water more would come, as it is never failing.

"Well, old fellow, I know I'm making a very long speech—just as if I was a going to "run" against you for the "Constituency of Catalinha in the "Commons" House—but I'm just about done; but," says I to myself one morning, 'if you put a dam here you will in three or four weeks, even with this small flow of water, have a little Lake or "Pond." And so it proved. I am going to have a little "bath-house put up, just like yours, when I get back."

By this time the two friends had prepared to plunge in. There was no place right there where they could take a "header" at first. They had to wade out a few feet before they could do so, but as the beach at that point was a "sand beach" they did not object.

"Isn't this water lovely this morning, Machelle?" said the Sieur, as he lazily lay on his back and floated after taking a "header."

"Sartainly," answered the Sessional Writer, who was also lazily floating on or in the blue water. "I think this is just lovely; there is not a breath of wind—it is not too hot—nor too cold—there are no flies round this morning apparently; I guess the cold weather last night has dampened their energy. And, Mon Sieur, do you notice how soft the water is? We must tell the Sage about our 'dip' in the 'Big-Sea-Water' when we get back. I wonder whether he is also a Lover of cold water."

Then the friends leisurely dried themselves, dressed and ran back to their Camp Fire. Gathering some dry sticks and "drift wood" which lay along the shore, they soon had a good fire again, and in a few minutes sat down to Breakfast. Within an hour after breakfast they were talking to the "honest yeoman" who owned the two "cow bossies" they had seen and followed on the previous evening. The farmer was engaged in "hitching up" his team to a big farm waggon which stood in front of the barn door. The waggon was painted prettily in a homely sort of way—bars or streaks of red being painted transversely—as it were—across the box.

"What a lovely waggon!" said Machelle to the Sieur as the two travelers drew near the farmer and his team. The proprietor seemed pleased with the compliment and said: "Good Morrow, Gentlemen. Yet, it is a fairish looking waggon. Of course it is a home-made affair—but none the worse for that. And as to the painting, my good wife and I bought some red ochre down to 'the Corners' and mixed it with some turpentine, and we used our white-wash brush. But it is a likely-looking waggon," continued the farmer, proudly surveying the red stripes on the waggon box, "and my wife and I are real proud of it. She did most of the painting herself. She is real neat and artistic about anything like that—so she is. Now, you see those pretty little pansy beds in front of the house over there? Some of them are round, some are oval, some oblong—and others different shapes. All sorts and shapes. I'm very fond of pansies myself, but I do not think I ever could have laid out those beds as purtily as she did. And they—the pansies I mean—are of all sorts and colours. We're real proud of our Pansies. Say, won't you come over and look at 'em? It'll please my wife, too—she does think a great sight of them Pansies."

"Well, I just love all sorts of Flowers," said the Sieur, with a kindly smile, "and perhaps if we go over and see the beds your Lady will give us each a button-hole bouquet—so that we'll look smart when we get to town."

"Get to town?" asked the farmer. "What town?"

"Wa'al, I hardly know the name of it—seeing we are both 'strangers in these 'ere parts,'" answered the Sieur blandly; "but any town will do us—won't it, Machelle? I mean the 'nearest town.'"

"I thought you wuz probably furriners by your haxcent, 'gentlemen. We don't see many furriners round these 'ere 'parts. As to the 'nearest town,' as you call it, it would be 'a purty long way from these 'ere 'diggings'—perhaps sev- 'eral hundred miles."

"You don't say so!" said the astonished Sieur.

"That's what I do, gentlemen, and if you weren't furriners, as I said, you would know that 'Little Muddy "York'"¹ is several hundred miles from here; away down "about the centre of Lake Ontario, and on the north side. "There's Trois Rivieres¹ and Mout Royale² and "Quebec, of course, but they are still further down towards "the Big Sea."

"But," said Machelle, "surely there must be some place "where one can buy some 'Ribbons and Laces to set'—I "men—that is—yes—some Ribbons and Laces."

"I don't know what you mean exactly by 'Ribbons and "Laces to set,' as you called 'em, but there are a couple of "real good stores down at 'The Corners': You can buy "most everything down there now they do say, 'from a brass "cannon to a needle'—as the saying is; but of course not "exactly. They don't keep any brass cannons 'in stock'—as "they call it—I fancy—but they have lots of needles. But "here comes my Gude Wife: Say, my dear, do they keep "such a thing as 'Ribbons and Laces to set' down at 'the "Corners'?"

"'Ribbons and Laces to set?'" repeated the Gude Wife.

"Yes, these 'ere gentlemen are furriners: and they are

¹—Probably the same place as the thriving city now called "Toronto"—in the Province of Ontario, and whose inhabitants have seen fit to style their city "the Queen City." I think I have read somewhere or other that in early days the present "Queen City" bore the romantic and picturesque title of "Little Muddy York."—Translator.

² Probably the town or city now called "Three Rivers," in the Province of Quebec.—Translator.

² Probably the same place which now is called "Montreal;" a thriving city in the Province of Quebec.—Translator.

"looking for a town or a city maybe where they can buy
"some Ribbons and Laces to set."

Then Machelle took off his hat and bowing to the Lady, said: "Our friend, the Gudeman of the House—is a little "mistaken: or rather I was mistaken myself when I mentioned the matter: the words 'to set' should not have been "added to the words 'Ribbons and Laces'—at any rate not "by themselves in the disconnected way in which I added "them. The fact is, madame, I simply wondered whether "there was not some place in this pretty neighborhood of "yours where my friend" (and here Machelle looked towards the Sieur, who took off his hat and bowed) "and I could "invest a few spare Yens in a supply of Ribbons and Laces."

The Gude wife had probably never heard such a lengthy and consecutive speech in her life, and she looked very much bewildered. Then she said to her Gude man—in a loud aside: "They do seem real nice gentlemen—and so perlite—"probably they are Frenchmans: it is too bad they are "furriners."

Then she said to Machelle, "There are two good shops at "the Corners' where they keep most everything. Bales "and bales of goods. They get 'em up by 'York Boats' from "away down below—Mount Royale and sich places. As to "Ribbons and Laces: Old Man Jackson, who keeps sto' at "the Corners,' has a real elegant supply of 'em—came up "the River last month sometime at the opening of navigation."

Then she turned to her Gude man and said: "My dear, "why can't you put some loose straw at the bottom of the "waggin and give the furrin gentlemen 'a lift' into 'the "Soo'?"

"A lift into the Soo'—madam?" enquired the perplexed Machelle; "we do not wish just now to be lifted anywhere "particularly."

"Oh—I was forgettin' the fact that you gentlemen is furriners and mos' everything has to be explained to you. Of course it is not your fault. You don't know any better and "you can't help bein' furriners. I will explain the matter." (And then the kind lady commenced to speak very slowly

and distinctly and to punctuate her words with her index or fore finger in this sort of a way): " 'The Corners' is the 'same as 'the Soo': both and the same: the very same. You 'can call it 'the Soo' or you can call it 'the Corners': it won't 'make any difference. And it won't hurt any one's feelings."

"Oh! I am so glad to hear that," said the Sieur, "I feel so 'relieved—I would not wish to hurt anyone's feelings—so 'easily and sorely wounded. Now, madam," (this with one of his genial and far-reaching smiles), "how far from here 'is it to 'the Soo' or 'the Corners,' or 'the Corners' or 'the 'Soo'—whichever it is?"

"How far is it, Gudeman? I alwuz clean forget the exact 'distance. And he alwuz knows because he travels the road 'so often. And I guess the poor horses know too—becoz it 'is not what you might call an extra easy road to drive 'over."

"About fifteen miles or more—nearer saxteen, I guess," answered the honest Yeoman. "As my good lady says, the 'road is not 'an extra easy road'—but it might be worse. It 'might also be better—eh Dobbin, eh Moll." (this latter enquiry was addressed to the horses—as they patiently waited, and as their master gently patted them). Then the good-hearted farmer continued—addressing "the furriners": "If it be so that you gentlemen would like to go with us to "the Soo"—my lady and I are going there to buy some "pervishions. I will just throw—as she said—some loose "straw into the box and you can sit there comfortably—that "is, as comfortably as can be expected under all the sar—"cumstances and a considerin' there ain't any springs to the "waggin and that there is a heap sight of stones on the "road."

"Thanks ever so much," said the Sieur, "and whilst you "are getting the straw perhaps your kind Lady would let "us see her beautiful Pansy Beds, and perhaps even give my "friend and myself a button-hole bouquet."

"Of course I will, with pleasure," said the Gude wife.

The pansies were really beautiful; neither of the visitors had ever seen such a lovely collection—every possible hue

and colour and combination seemed represented in those neatly-kept flower beds. And never were button-hole bouquets prettier than the ones worn by the two "furriners" who accompanied the good lady back to the barn yard after the examination of the pansy beds.

"Where did you ever get such lovely flowers?" asked the Sieur of the Gude wife. "I mean where did you get the "roots or the seed from which you started your flower "garden?"

"Well, to tell you the truth, sir, I alwuz says that we "should not claim to own all these beautiful flowers."

"Why who else could make any claim?" asked the Sieur.

"Well, you see, sir, one day—it was two years ago last "month—early in May, 'the Bonnie Leddies' were over here "—accompanying of course by 'Old John.'—at that time I "only had one flower bed and only a few pansy roots. Miss "Elfie—she's the Laird's winsome daughter, you know—"

"No I don't know—never heard of the 'winsome' young "lady before—I am a stranger in these parts you know. But "kindly proceed with your story and then please tell us all "about the fair young lady."

"Well," continued the Gude wife, "Miss Elfie asked me if "I was very fond of pansies. I suppose she asked me that "because she saw I had a few in my one flower bed—the one "just under that nearest window. I told her I just loved "them. 'So do I,' says she, 'and if you like to make some "more flower beds I will get Old John when he is weeding "and thinning out our beds this week to bring you several "roots.' I thanked her kindly of course, and within two or "three days Old John came walking over from Summertrees "with a big basket on his arm, and he says—says he to me— "The Bonnie Leddies"—he alwuz calls 'em 'the Bonnie "Leddies'—'asked me to bring over these few pansy roots "with their compliments, and hoping they will grow well "and make you very happy.' Them were his exact words. "Fancy saying a 'few pansy roots'—why there must have "been over a hundred: there were enough anyway to fill "these beds. But they are so good-hearted and kind. Every-

"one who knows them just loves 'the Bonnie Leddies' of 'Summertrees."

"Well," said the Sieur with a gay laugh, "I see your Gude man is waiting patiently for us. Suppose we all get in the 'pretty weggon' and start out and then *en-route*—I mean 'on the way to 'the Corners' or 'the Sue'—whichever it is—'you can tell my friend and me all about 'the Bonnie Leddies,' so that we can love them too—so to speak."

"But there is one thing I was nearly forgetting, our kind 'host; which way are you going to drive? We left some 'goods and things down near the shore by our Camp Fire—'where we slept last night—down near the end of your cow 'path. Could we not get them and store them in your barn 'until we come back or need them again—that is such things 'as we won't need for the present?"

"Sartainly," replied the farmer, "but I am not going to 'drive that way—in fact our road goes this other way. I 'will go with you and help you bring your stuff and the 'Gude wife can come with us if she likes or stay here till 'we come back. The horses will stand quietly till we 'return."

"The Gude Wife" wished to go with the others: she said it was a lovely day and she would like the walk—and she added: "I have not been down to the lake shore for some 'time and I would like to see the blue water again."

So the Gude wife went with her husband and "the fur-riners." Her jolly husband said, (this was in reply to the apology made by the Sieur with reference to the loss of time involved in connection with the bringing of the stuff up to the barn): "'Loss of time'! we're not in any hurry—the "Gude wife or me. This is a Holiday. Whenever we go to "'the Corners' we take all day for it, generally a couple of "days—and make a holiday out of it. So we're in no hurry. "We don't care whether we get back to-night or to-morrow "night, do we, my dear?" (this enquiry being addressed to his good wife).

"Not a bit, gudeman," replied his wife. This conversation took place whilst the party were traveling along the cow-path to the lake shore.

When they reached the Camping Ground the Gude wife said she would go and walk along the sandy beach whilst the folks got their goods together. It did not take them five minutes to do this and then they joined the lady on the beach. They found her sitting on a log and idly throwing stones into the water. She said to her husband: "Oh, this is so lovely down here. We really must often come and sit down here by the water's edge. It is not far to come."

"It really is a lovely spot, my dear," answered her good man, "and we must really try and arrange to come down 'here oftener.'" Then when the lady saw they were all ready she got up and said: "I don't want to keep you folks 'waiting.'" And they all started to walk back to the waiting team. There was not much to carry: Machelle carried the blankets, neatly rolled together—their host carried the cooking utensils and some other "traps"—and the Sieur, who gallantly escorted the Gude wife, carried a rather heavy little bag. They looked so enquiringly at the little bag that the Sieur said: "Madame—I see you look rather wonderfully at this little bag: it contains a few Yens—that is all. "Not so many perhaps after all—but still sufficient to purchase a few Ribbons and Laces and a 'Pedlar's Pack' in "which to put them."

"I heard you use that word 'Yens' before—and I wondered what kind of a foreign word it was. Do you mean "money?"

"Yes, madame," answered the Sieur.

"Then why don't you say 'money?'" she asked, with a laugh, "so that we plain country-folk would understand you. "You know"—she added—"you two gentlemen are the first "and only furriners we have seen in these 'ere parts, and "we have lived here a good many years."

Then the Gude Lady called out to her husband, who was walking ahead with Machelle: "Gudeman—how many "years is it since we've been married? You know I'm no "hand to remember dates or figures—and he's a fust class "hand at 'em."

"Twenty-sax years come Michaelmas," promptly answered

the gallant husband—"and twenty-sax happy years have 'they been, dear."

"I am sure of that," said Machelle.

"So am I," said the Sieur.

"But are you really going to be Pedlars?" asked the Lady.

"Yes," answered Machelle, "that is the present calculation."

"Won't that be lovely!" said the Gudewife. "I never saw a Pedlar afore, and often have thought I would like to see 'one and have one come to my house a-selling Ribbons and 'Laces and things. I have read about 'em in books and 'newspapers."

"Are there no Pedlars in this part of the country?" asked the Sieur.

"I never heard tell of one in these parts," answered their host.

"Do you think the Profession would pay in this part of the country—that is, would it be a profitable avocation or 'calling?'" asked the Sieur.

"Them is dreadful learned words, stranger," answered the Gude man, "but I think I catch your meaning: I think 'it should pay very well. There are only two stores—the 'two shops at 'the Corners'—for miles and miles—and most 'people have to travel a long, long way to reach a sto'. If 'you carried a good stock of dry goods and 'sundries,' as 'they call 'em I think—with you in yo' pack—you should do 'very well: that is if yo' prices were right—and if you were 'good salesmen."

"There's a lot of 'ifs' in that little speech of yourn, Gude man," said Machelle; "in a word, now, don't you think 'if we lay in a nice little stock of Ribbons and Laces we 'could do fairly well?"

"Yes, if—"

"Oh never mind the 'if,' my friend," answered Machelle, with a gay laugh; "we'll come back, maybe, to your home—"stead to-morrow and sell you our entire purchase at an "advance—that is to say, profit—of one hundred per cent!" and then they all laughed.

By this time they had come in sight of the barn, and "Moll" and "Dobbin" neighed gladly in welcome.

"What dear old horses they are to be sure!" said the Sieur, going up to the patient creatures and caressing them.

"That they are, sir," said the Gude wife, taking out of her hand bag or reticule or shopping bag—or whatever it was—a couple of sweet biscuits and putting one in Moll's mouth and one in Dobbin's. In the meantime the Gude man and Machelle stowed away in a corner of the barn the blankets and other "traps." "I will keep these Yens," said the Sieur, "we may need them down to 'the Corners' or 'the Sue,' or whatever it is called."

Then they all got in and their journey long and tedious of "saxteen miles and a bittoch"—as our Scotch friends say—commenced.

"I've been cogitating quite a bit over the funny name "some people apparently give to 'the Corners,'" said Machelle. "How do you spell it—'Soo' or 'Sue,' or how?"

"I've seen it spelt both ways," answered the Lady; "but I think the right way must be 'Sue.'"

"Why that's a girl's name—a lady's name—is it not?" enquired Machelle.

"To be sure," answered the Lady; "it is said to be called "'Sue' after Sis Susan Jackson—that is the wife of Old 'Brer Jackson—the sto' keeper at 'the Corners.'"

"You don't say so," said the Sieur; "isn't that interesting, Machelle?"

"Indeed it is," that gentleman answered; "perfectly "romantic and picturesque." Then their fair informant continued:

"When some people wish to 'put on style'—as the saying "is—and to speak very formally and learnedly—as it were—"they do not simply call 'the Corners' 'the Sue' but 'the "'Susan Mary'."

"'The Susan Mary'?" repeated the Sieur; "why that "sounds like the name of a 'Stone Hooker' on the classic. "Cattawaul River!"

"I don't know nothing about your 'Stone Hookers'—as "you call 'em—whatever they may be—or about your 'classic

"Cattawaul River,' I never did know much about them 'ere
"foreign parts: but I know Sis Jackson's name in full is 'Sis
"Susan Mary Jackson.' I saw it to onct writ in full on a
"small piece of pasteboard—I think they call 'em visiting
"cards, which the sto' keeper's lady left at Summertrees.
"The way it was was this: I had gone to visit 'the Bonnie
"Leddies' and to take a cup of tea with them and Old John.
"When I reached the house I found the young leddies had
"gone a-trout-fishing with the Laird. So I sat down and
"had a quiet cup of tea with Old John. Whilst we wuz
"a-sippin' of our tea a knock comes to the front do'. And
"Old John went to see who it was and he came back in a
"few minutes holdin' between his fingers—or rather between
"one of his thumbs and one of his fingers—a little, shiny-
"white, stiff piece of card-board or paste-board, and on it
"was written:

"SIS SUSAN MARY JACKSON,
"The Corners,
"New Ontario."

"You don't say so!" said the Sieur, with a gay laugh.
"But I do," answered the Gude wife; "and Old John said
"to me, 'What'll I do with this 'ere? She says to me when
"she comes to the do'—or rather when I got to the do' arter
"she had knocked—'Is yo' missuses in Mr. Old John?'
"speaking quite solemn and formal like. 'No, ma'am,
"neither of the Bonnie Leddies is in just this present minit.
"The fac' is, ma'am, they both went out to the stream this
"mornin' arter breakfast with the Laird a-trout-fishin'.
"Will you please to sit down an' wait till they return?
"They won't be long now, as it is a-gettin' well on in the
"arternoon and they'll be comin' back to dinner.' Then
"she answered very formal and stiffly like: 'No, I thank
"you, I'll just leave my card.' And she handed me this
"little thing and got in her buggy or waggin or whatever
"it might be and her hired man drove her away.' Well,
"when 'the Bonnie Leddies' and the Laird came back
"—it wuz only a few minits arterwards—we all had a hearty
"laugh. The Laird says, says he, 'You see Mrs. Jackson

"has just come back from a visit she has been making to friends in Little Muddy York and she probably has been 'in society' there," says he."

"Anyway I have heard," continued the Gude wife, "that people are commencing more and more to pronounce the name of 'the Corners' in full and to call it 'the Susan Mary' instead of 'the Sue.'"

"The Corners' is good enough for me," said her husband with a laugh.

"And for me too," said his wife.*

Just then we overtook on the road a little old man trudging along carrying a lamb on his shoulder.

"What have you got there, Old John?" asked our host.

"Oh it is one of our wee Lambies—it strayed away from the flock someway—and I've had quite a time hunting it up "I can tell you. But it is all right now and will soon be "home. I was afraid that it might have got caught tight in "some underbrush somewhere or other—or that some dog "might have worried it. They don't often get away from "our flock. I look arter them pretty close."

"I know you do," said our host.

Then the Gude Wife said, "how's 'the Bonnie Leddies' this morning, Old John?"

"Fust rate," answered the faithful old servant. "Fust rate, thankee kindly. Are you coming up to see us?"

"Not just now, Old John—but we'll try and look in for a cup of tea on our way back from 'the Corners.'"

"Oh, you be a goin' to 'the Sue,' be you?" asked Old John.

"Yes, we're making that way," answered the Gudeman.

"Well, then, do you mind waiting just ten minutes, and I'll just take this short trail through the bush and leave "this wee lambie with her mother, who I know will be fretting arter her; and then I'll slip into the house and see if

*The Translator wonders if the present thriving "twin cities of Sault Ste. Marie" are the successors of "the Corners" of "the Susan Mary," which apparently existed in the halcyon days of His Majesty, King William the Fourth. The subject, from an antiquarian point of view, is an interesting one. Perhaps the places are not the same, because it is currently believed that the name, "Le Sault de Sainte Marie," refers to the Rapids or Falls in the St. Mary River at the point where the present towns are situated; the word "Sault" in the French language signifying "Jump" or "Leap"—the jump or leap of the River St. Mary: the word being pronounced "So" not "Soo" or "Sue."

"the 'Bonnie Leddies' or the Laird would like anything down at 'the Corners.' I won't keep you long. Do ye mind waiting?"

"Not a bit," answered our kindly host. We would do more than that for any of you folks at Summertrees. See what you've done for us."

Before our host had quite finished his little speech the faithful old man with a friendly nod had started to hurry through the woods, still tenderly carrying on his shoulder the "wee lambie," as he called it.

"Is that the 'Old John' you mentioned to us?" asked the Sieur, addressing himself to the Gude Wife—"the one who brought you the Pansies?"

"Yes, and a dear old man he is to be sure," answered the Lady. "He is part and parcel of Summertrees, so he is."

"Where is Summertrees?" asked Machelle; "is it far from here?"

"By rights we are on the Estate now," answered the Gudeman. "The line used to run about half a mile to the westward, but Old Man Covet Grab—more's the pity—has gradually—little by little—got possession of the lands of the Estate until now they do say the only land left to the poor Laird out of the whole sax hundred and forty acres which they say was once called 'Summertrees' is the land on which the old Homestead is built and the garden and a little bush round it."

"Why, this is awful—perfectly awful!" exclaimed the Sieur. "Who is this 'Old Man Covet Grab'—as you call him? and how does he come to be able to take all this land away from these people?"

"Aye, please tell us," said Machelle anxiously.

"Well, I cannot explain all about it, but as far as I've heard there were what they call mortgages on the Estate at the time the present Laird came into possession. And in trying to get out of his present troubles the poor Laird only got further involved in some way or other. The whole thing is so tangled up that no one rightly understands it. But one thing seems certain, and that is Old Man Covet Grab has now got nearly all the Estate, and

"they do say that he has his eye and his hand, too, on the remaining few acres."

"No, surely not!" exclaimed both men.

"So I've heard," answered their host. "And that is what 'Old John' thinks himself. He says he understands the 'old miser—that is Old Man Covet Grab—has one of those 'dreadful things—'mortgages,' I think they call 'em—on 'the old homestead and on the remaining two or three 'acres; the sixth mortgage, I think he calls it; as far as I 'understand it, there were five mortgages which have all 'ready been foreclosed. And the old miser threatens to 'foreclose this sixth mortgage very shortly. In fact, from 'what Old John told me only two or three days ago, he is 'afraid, I believe, that they may be 'turned out of house and 'home'—as the saying is—any day."

"No?" said the Sieur.

"I am afraid it is only too true," said the Gude Wife. "Old John has been very sad about the matter lately; he is often over at our house, you know, as we are such close neighbors. Well, the very last time he was over he almost 'cried when he spoke about the matter—and he said 'oh, 'my puir 'Bonnie Leddies'!'"

"How many yens would it take to pay off that sixth 'mortgage?" inquired the Sieur.

"I don't know, I'm sure—but it would take a lot of 'money."

By this time Old John was seen hurrying back across the trail through the woods. In a few minutes he reached the waggon, and leaning over towards the Gude Wife he said—kind of *sotto voce* like but still loud enough for the would-be pedlars to hear him—in fact, they could not help hearing what he said, as he spoke in a very loud whisper—what is sometimes called a "stage whisper"—"The 'Bonnie Leddies' would like two or three ribbands—a piece of blue and a piece of pink and a piece of crimson—here's a little note 'about it' (and here the old man handed to the Gude Wife a small piece of paper folded and twisted in that peculiar way young ladies sometimes fold their notes as well as their curl-papers) "and—if your Gudeman doesn't mind, would

"he get a pound of Tobacco for the Laird and me. We're "nearly out and that's a fact. Your Gudeman knows the "kind of Tobacco the Laird smokes. Old Man Jackson "always keeps it in his sto'. Here is enough money to pay "for all. If it takes more let us know when you return."

"Alright, Old John, tell the folks we'll be sure and re-member to get the things, and we'll call in on our way "home. Good-bye."

And once more the waggon was again a-rumbling and a-creaking along the dusty road. In a few minutes the trav-ellers passed a road running to the southward.

"That is the regular road into Summertree—the waggon "road," explained the Gudeman. In fact some of the chim-neys of the old Homestead and some part of its gabled roof could be seen from the main road as the waggon passed along—the old Homestead being built on a little hill or "rise" at the end of the cross-roads.

In a few minutes afterwards they came to an old Log House standing near the roadside with a good-sized "clear-ing" in a fair state of cultivation behind it.

"Just excuse me a minute, gentlemen," said the Gudeman getting down from the waggon and handing the "ribbons"—I mean the reins—to the Gude Wife—"these people are "also neighbors—I will just ask them if we can get anything "for them when we are down to 'the Corners.'"

In five minutes the Gudeman returned and said with a smile, "there are no ribbons or laces required here—noth-ing but a couple of pounds of granulated sugar and half a "pound of Young Hyson Tea."

Then the horses and the waggon jogged along again.

In a minute or two afterwards the Gude Wife said :

"I have been a thinking—would it not be a good idea for "us simply to buy the Tobacco for the folks at Summer-trees—and then let you two gentlemen Pedlars sell to the "Bonnie Leddies the ribbons they require."

"That would be a first rate idea," said the Sieur.

"Capital," said Machelle—"it is indeed a 'happy thought' "—as the saying is. We will have them for our first cus-tomers."

"What I wuz a thinking," continued the Gude Wife, "is this: here are people who are really anxious and desirous to *buy* some Ribbons. You are going into that business and will soon be really anxious and desirous to *sell* some Ribbons. Now of course the order is a very small one, but it will be a start for you. Everything has to have a commencement. I daresay, even old man Jackson at 'the Sue' had to start in a small way when he commenced. And then again it should be a help to you afterwards in yo' bizness as Pedlars to say that yo' first sale was a sale of some Ribbons to 'the Bonnie Leddies' at Summertrees."

"Right you are, Gude Wife," said her husband. "It will help them all over the country side. Everyone loves 'the 'Bonnie Leddies,' as their Old John so lovingly calls 'em. And as to commencing bizness in a small way: I've heard old man Jackson say his own self that his first sale was a box of matches for eighteen cents."

"We are ever so much obliged to you kind people for all your kindness," said the Sieur. "I'll tell you what we'll do: We'll go down to 'the Corners' or 'the Sue' or whatever it is called with you folks—and there we'll buy our Pedlar's Pack—and a supply of Ribbons and Laces and then—if you will bring us back with you as far as Summertrees on your return we will go in there and make our first sale."

"How's that, Machelle?"

"First rate," answered that gentleman.

"Now, before we forget it, perhaps you had better hand to me that little order concerning the Ribbons which 'Old 'John'—as you call the gentleman—gave you just now. We will need to have it, perhaps, as a Bill of Specifications or whatever it is called."

Here the Gude Wife took out of her reticule or hand bag the little folded and twisted piece of paper and handed it to the Sieur, who said:

"I suppose there is no harm in my opening this little document and reading it now—seeing that my friend and I are—as it were—Pedlars *de facto*, even if not *de jure*."

"Them's awful learned-sounding words," said the Gude Wife; "but I never did know much about any foreign language. You're the first furriners we ever see."

On opening the note the Sieur found and read aloud the following words and figures, which were written in a pretty feminine hand:

"1 yard blue ribbon $\frac{3}{4}$ in. wide.
"I do pink " do do
"I do crimson " do do

"Alright," continued the Sieur, "I will see that this little order is properly filled."

Then Machelle said: "But you never told us who 'Old 'Man Covet Grab,' as you called him, is."

"Wa'al, you never want to get in his clutches, young man," said their host, "or you'll find it hard work to get out. He is what you call a 'money lender.'"

"And what are 'the Bonnie Leddies' called?" asked the Sieur. "They surely have some other names besides that 'pretty appellation and term of endearment.'"

Then the Gude Wife continued:

"The Laird's Daughter is called 'Elfie'—the other is 'Retta.' She is the Laird's niece; but the two are always together and people often take them for sisters. Elfie is fair, with tresses of gold, and she has beautiful blue eyes. Retta is what might be called a Brunette—she has dark—very dark eyes—and her hair is also dark."

"Thank you, Madame," said Machelle. "With that description we should be able to tell 'the Bonnie Leddies' if we met them anywhere—I fancy."

Then as they jogged along they got talking about "the Sue" again: Machelle asked how many people were living at "the Corners."

The Gudeman said: "You'll not find it a very big place. There are the two stores or shops: old man Jackson's and 'the new store'—as they still call it—but 'young Mr. 'Brown'—as they still call him—has been there a good many years now—and has children most grown up. Old man Jackson of course has been there a very long time—he was one of the fust men to come into this part of the country. He is not an unfriendly sort of man when you get to know him, but you'll think him rather odd—perhaps—first when you see him and when you first hear him talk."

"He talks a great deal—and kind of 'biggity' sometimes. "And people do say sometimes that old man Jackson likes "to hear hisself talk. Howsomever, he does stand some-times in a peculiar sort of way and hold his head to one "side when he is a-talkin' as if he was listenin' to hisself talk. "His wife is the Lady the Gude Wife told you about—Sis "Susan Mary Jackson. Old Man Jackson is a good bizness "man—there's no doubt. When he wuz a lad he went to a "Bizness Collidge down there at Little Muddy York—and "what he don't know about Bizness ain't worth knowing. "He is a great hand for figures, too. He'll look at a load of "cordwood when it is on a waggon or a sleigh and size is up "quicker'n any man I ever saw, and he'll say, 'Bill, there's "just three quarters of a cord there if you'll throw on the "load three more sticks,' or he'll look at a load of hay and "say, 'Wa'al, John, I should think if there were six good "forksfull added there would be fifteen hunder pound in "that load.' It isn't every man that can calculate that "close."

"No, there ain't many such men," said M. Machelle—"they're gettin' to be real scarce-like."

"Then as to counterfeit money, he is a 'terror to cats'— "as the sayin' is—on that score; they do say the old man can "tell a counterfeit coin by the very feel of it without lookin' "at it—but that may be exaggeration. When you go into "the sto' you will see a great big card hangin' up in the cen- "tre of the sto'—it has been there ever since I can remem- "ber. And it bears some words like this 'ere:

" 'WARNIN'!

" 'Any person attemptin' to pass any counterfeit
" 'coin inside of dis 'ere sto' will be prosecuted ac-
" 'ordin' to Law.'

"Signed, JOHN JACKSON, Proprietor."

"Well, Machelle and I will be alright on that score with "our yens. I have not opened the bag or looked at 'em "since I got 'em from the Bank, but I know they're all "right. I was in a hurry coming away and I sent a boy "over to the Bank to get me a few yens, and telling them to "put them in a bag and here they are safe and sound."

"Wa'al" said the Gudeman, after they had traveled a little further, "suppose'n we stop here and bait the horses and boil the tea kettle by the side of the road—Gypsy fashion—and take a cup of tea? We've now got down off the high lands and we ought to make 'the Sue' in another hour and a half or two hours—dependin' of course upon the roads."

Machelle looked at his watch and said: "It is nearly two o'clock. How long do you think it will take you to do your business at 'the Corners' and get started back again?"

Said the Gudeman—as he unhitched his horses and took off their bridles and let them commence to eat for their lunch the fresh and sweet wild grass and the juicy and fragrant clover which grew by the wayside in great abundance. "My wife and I can get through with our business and be ready to start back again for home in one hour from the time we strike 'the Corners.' All our business this time is to be done in Brer Jackson's sto', as I understand it. I haven't to go to the blacksmith's shop this trip, as I often have to. I'm glad of that. And my wife don't have to go to the Misses O'Flaherty's milliner shop. Ha! Ha! Ha!"

"What is the matter, Gudeman?" asked the Sieur.

"Oh, I was only a-laughin' to myself about the change which is a-comin' over some of the Ladies in this part of the country since the Misses O'Flaherty opened their milliner shop at 'the Corners.' You see befo' that there wuz just two sto's—Brer Jackson's and 'the new sto', as they call it—and of course the Blacksmith's shop. Now, you see we have a real milliner shop—opened about a month ago. Old Man O'Flaherty was gettin' along purty well and a-raisin' purty good crops, and as he had two likely-lookin' gals he thought he would send 'em to a sister of his'en who lives somewhere down below—not in Canady but near there—in one of the 'New England States'—as they call 'em—'Boston' I think is the name of the town whar the sister lived. So the two gals went down by York boat all the way to Mout Royale—and then it's not far, I have heard tell to Boston and them parts. Howsomever the next year they came back stylish young ladies—if you

"please—a-wearing kid gloves every day in the week—and
"putting their hair in curl-papers every night—and wearing
"‘frizzes’ and ‘bangs’ and all sorts of things. And, right
"away, they opened up a milliner shop in part of Brer
"Brown’s shop—or rather in the little building adjoining it—
"you’ll see when you get to ‘the Corners’—and they have a
"sign up in front:

"‘The Misses O’Flaherty,
"‘Milliners and Dressmakers
"‘Au Chic.’

"And in one window they have a big sign:

"‘Hats Trimmed in the
"‘Boston Style.’

"and in the other window there is another big piece of card-
"board bearing these words:

"‘Tailor-Made Costumes!
"‘Everything Au Chic’

"The people round ‘the Corners’ are still trying to find out
"what the words ‘Au Chic’ mean, and I’ve heard tell that
"Old Man Jackson has wrote away to a brother in Trois
"Rivieres, who teaches a High School there, asking him
"exactly what the words ‘Au Chic’ mean. It is only about
"a month since the Misses O’Flaherty opened their estab-
"lishment, but already some very gorgeous bonnets have
"been ordered by some of the farmers’ wifes and daughters
"round these Diggings. And" (with a laugh) "I’m gettin'
"to be afraid that some mornin’ at breakfas’ time the Gude
"Wife’ll say to me: ‘My dear, do you think you could spare
"‘me five dollars in about three weeks from now?’ And
"then when I would ask her what for, she might say, ‘Oh,
"‘there is just a love of a bonnet which would just suit me
"down to “the Corners” in the Miss O’Flaherty’s milliner
"‘shop.’ Ha! Ha! Ha!”

Everyone—including the Gude Wife—joined in the
laughter. Then she quickly said, “I guess, dear, I can get
“along for a while without any of the ‘Chic’ Bonnets you’ve
“been tellin’ us about.”

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And her husband gallantly said—whilst the Sieur and Machelle murmured their approval—‘No matter what Bon-net you wear, it will always look pretty, even if it is not “Chic.”’

In a short time the merry party were again jogging along *en route* to “the Sue.”

“Do you find this an easy way of riding, sir?” asked the Gudeman presently, addressing the Sieur.

“I enjoy it very much indeed,” that gentleman answered. “Of course I think I prefer traveling in a ‘Stone Hooker’—‘eh Machelle?—probably the picturesque ‘stone hooker’ may ‘have more springs in its hull than this craft seems to have’—but I like it very well—except when we strike an extra ‘big boulder.’”

For some time the team had been able to make better progress—the highlands having been left behind and the road being freer from the boulders to which the Sieur had objected, and within a comparatively short time the Gude wife was able to say, as they reached the top of a small grade or ascent: “There’s ‘the Sue’—‘the Corners’!”

“Isn’t it a lovely site for a town—even a large city!” exclaimed Machelle. “And that beautiful River—isn’t it a ‘beautiful sheet of water’!”

“Yes!” answered the Sieur, “one would think it was the ‘beautiful and classic Cattawaul.’”

The team stopped in front of Old Man Jackson’s sto’ and were tied to a hitching post which was conveniently planted near the sto’ door. “Moll and Dobbin would not run away,” explained the Gude man with a laugh, “but it is a kind of ‘customary formality to hitch horses to this post, and so we ‘follow the custom.’”

“Aye, aye,” said Machelle, “in Rome do as the Romans “‘do’—as the saying is.”

They all went into the sto’ together and they found the fair “Sis Susan Mary Jackson” “waiting” in the sto’ herself. “My husband is busy in his office,” she explained, “and so I ‘am waiting on the customers in the interim.’”

(Afterwards the Gude wife said to her husband she supposed by the word “interim” Sis Jackson meant the word

"sto"—that it was perhaps more stylish and more like the way folks talked in Muddy Little York to say "in the interim" instead of "in the sto.")

"But," continued the fair saleswoman, "I will call him if you like."

"Oh, no, Mrs. Jackson, you can easily get us what we "need," and then she gave her order—the few "pervisions" they needed themselves—the tobacco they wished for the gentlemen at Summertrees, and the sugar and tea for the neighbors who, it will be remembered, lived a little this side of Summertrees.

The fair saleswoman deftly filled the order—frequent practice had made her an expert, as it were, and none of the goods contained in the order were heavy to handle.

Meanwhile the would-be Pedlars strolled round the sto' and read all the advertisements fastened up on the walls appertaining to divers kinds of teas, soaps, baking powder and tobacco. They also read the two mottoes of the establishment which appeared in several conspicuous places: these mottoes were:

*"Live and Let Live," and
"Small Profits and Quick Returns."*

They also stopped pensively—at it were—before the warning placard concerning counterfeit money, to which their new-found friends had referred, and read it over two or three times—for want of other employment.

By the time they had read the "warning" three times all the "pervisions" and sundries contained in the order given by the Gude wife had been neatly put up by the fair hands of the fair saleswoman.

Then the Gude wife said to Mrs. Jackson, looking towards the would-be Pedlars: "These two gentlemen are Furriners "and they are going into the Perfession of Pedlars," (at this juncture the Sieur and his comrade each politely raised their caps and bowed), "and they wish to purchase a Pedlar's "Pack—whatever that may be—and a supply of Ribbons "and Laces."

The fair saleswoman replied: "Ah, I see, this is a kind

"of wholesale order; perhaps I had better call the Proprietor." But there was no necessity for calling that gentleman; "the office" in which he was "working" was really in the store, or rather at the back of it, and only separated from the rest of the establishment by a little railing. The furniture of "the office" consisted of a big desk, a tall office stool, some big leather-bound account books, several big files of "Invoices" and "Statements Current," several little long flat books labelled respectively "Bills Payable" and "Bills Receivable," a couple of big ink bottles containing black ink—one containing red ink, two or three pens, some account paper and blotting paper.

The "general merchant" spent a good deal of time in this "office"—"working at his books"—as his fair wife used proudly to explain to the customers on whom she waited, and sometimes she would add: "You see, Sis Johnsing, 'Mr. Jackson studied his Perfession in the Bizness Collidge "at Little Muddy York—and he has to keep his Books just "so. He keeps them all by 'Double Entry.' I don't understand that system of book-keeping myself—but it is all the "style—they do tell me 'down below' and 'down east.' But "of course one has to be eddicated in a Bizness Collidge in "order to understand it."

From what some people used to say it would have been a good thing for old Mr. Jackson if he had not understood or thought he understood the system of Double Entry Book Keeping—because the practice of it not only seemed to entail a large amount of unnecessary work and unnecessary copying—but what was worse, even simple accounts became so involved and complicated and tangled and "mixed up" generally that sometimes it seemed as if it would require a whole college of accountants to set them right. And it was also said that some good customers had left old man Jackson's sto' and gone over to the opposition establishment owing to the very unsatisfying way in which the new system of book keeping seemed to affect their otherwise simple accounts. For instance, old Mr. O'Flaherty aforementioned is reported to have said to a sympathizing neighbour: "I "like old Brer Jackson—I guess he is a good merchant and

"understands the sto' bizness. But I do wish he did not understand that Double Entry System of Book Figuring, "as they calls it. It may be stylish and all the loikes of that—and it may be alright in big towns like Little Muddy "York, and By Town,* but it is a wee bit too complicated "for 'the Corners' or 'the Sue,' as some of the stylish folks "are beginning to call it. Now one time I had been runnin' "a little account at Brer Jackson's—and I owed Brer Jack- "son on that account exactly Forty Dollars to a cent— "neither more nor less. I had received four accounts from "time to time from Brer Jackson showing the amounts of "the goods we had got on the four occasions—Brer Jackson "had written at the top of these four accounts the words " 'Statement Current.' I did not object to that nor to any- "thing in these four accounts. They wuz alright—and a "child could add 'em together and make the 'sum total'—as "they call it—the even Forty Dollars. Well I sold Brer "Jackson Ten and a half tons of Hay at \$7.50 per ton. My "hay came to \$78.75. There seemed no doubt as to that. "Brer Jackson admitted it himself—he said there was no "doubt I had put into his barn ten and a half tons of first- "class hay—and he also said the price had been agreed on "between us at \$7.50 per ton. He also said there was no "doubt his four 'Statements Current' only amounted to "Forty Dollars. So I took for granted—as anybody would "—that there was thirty-eight dollars and seventy-five cents "coming to me from Brer Jackson. I was not in need of the "money at the time and thought I would leave it until the "spring, when I wuz calculatin' to have a barn-raisin' over "to our place. A day or two afore the time set for the raisin' "I went down to 'the Corners' and said to old Brer Jackson: " 'I am havin' a barn riz on my place and I kind of thought " 'that little balance would come in handy.' He said per- "litely: 'Mr. O'Flaherty will you kindly walk into the office' "—and he gets me a chair and he sits up on his high stool "and opens his big books—the ones bound in leather you "know. After he had done a lot of 'toting up'—as he called

*Probably the same place which now in its larger and amplified form is called "Ottawa"—the capital of the Dominion of Canada. The Translator understands the Capital City used to be styled "By Town."

“it, with a pencil, he rubbed his head several times and then
“said in a kind of dazed way: ‘It does seem awfully
“‘strange.’ ‘What seems strange, Brer Jackson?’ says I.
“‘Well,’ he says, ‘I really thought I owed you \$38.75.’ ‘So
“‘you do,’ says I; ‘but if it is not convenient I can come
“‘again, Brer Jackson—I ain’t in any particular hurry—and
“‘everyone knows you’re “as good as the wheat”—as the
“‘saying is—but I know you merchants must often have
“‘large bills to pay—and—’ ‘But it is not that, Mr. O’Fla-
“‘herty,’ he said, a rubbin’ of his head again. ‘The fact is—
“‘this “Ledger Account” brings you in debt to me in \$38.75.’
“‘It can’t be,’ says I, bewildered like; ‘there must be a mis-
“‘take somewhere.’ ‘No, sir, there cannot be a mistake
“‘anywheres—becos my books are always kept Double
“‘Entry. If they were simply kept Single Entry there
“‘might be room for a mistake.’

“‘Well, please tote it up agin,’ says I, ‘and see if those
“‘books of yourn cannot bring you in owing me \$38.75.’

“Well he tried and tried and rubbed his head and looked
“up dozens—aye, scores of entries—and he could not make
“it come out anything else, but that I owed him \$38.75.

“Says he—I don’t understand it; all the entries seem to
“have been properly entered in the “Day Book” and then
““Journalized”—then they have been carried into the
““Stock Account” and the “Merchandize Account” and
“into the “Cash Account,” and finally they have been
““posted” into the “Ledger Account,” and here they are.

“Says I to him—I felt utterly bewildered—in fact entirely
“and completely ‘flabbergasted’—as the saying is: ‘They
“do say “Figures don’t lie!” but these figures don’t seem
“to be particularly truthful! No, sir—that’s a fact—they
“seem to be rather mendacious,’ says he—again a-rubbin’
“his head and starin’ so hard at the ‘Ledger Account,’ you
“would a’ most have thought he wuz a lookin’ right through
“it.

“Finally he said, ‘Here, Mr. O’Flaherty, I will let you
“have the \$38.75 and you simply give me your “I. O. U.”
“for it—and then I will set to work again, even if it
“takes me a hull week, and I’ll go through all those en-

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"tries agin and surely it will come out alright. The Books
"can't be wrong, Mr. O'Flaherty, becoz they're kept on
"the Double Entry System, and they must be right.'

"Says I: 'If it is not convenient, I will come agin and get
"the money—but I would rather not sign an "I. O. U.",
"as you call it—that is if the "I. O. U." goes into your
"books—and through all those different accounts you've
"bin tellin' me about—becoz,' says I, 'if the Double Entry
"System now makes me owe you \$38.75 instead of you
"owing it to me—if I give you an "I. O. U." for that sum
"and it goes through the Books I might be brought out
"to owe you \$77.50—that is double the \$38.75, as I figure
"it in my head.'

"'Or,' continued I, 'the contrary critters might take a no-
"tion to run the other way and they might bring you in
"owing me \$77.50. They ain't to be trusted and that's a
"fac,' says I. 'I cannot take any money at all from you if
"it is to be entered down in those 'ere men—men—what
"was that word again, Brer Jackson?' says I. 'Mendacious,'
"says he. 'In those mendacious books,' says I. 'You know
"you owe me \$38.75—Books or no Books—and I know the
"same. Now, if you will please give me that sum and not
"let it appear in those mendacious books, alright—if not,
"I'll try and get on without it; it would be safer for both
"of us, perhaps.'

"Well, finally he gave me the \$38.75 and said 'I will make
"an exception to the general rule for once, as you insist on
"it.' and then he rubbed his head again and says, 'It always
"has run in my head that I owed you a balance of \$38.75—
"and I think so, too; but then the Books must be right.'

"Well, when I went home and told my gude wife, she was
"that scared she would never trade any more at the old sto'!
"Says she, 'I don't really like to trust that Double Entry
"System.' Of course she knew there was \$38.75 a-comin'
"to us and had counted on it as well as me. In fact, she got
"so scared about that System of Book Keeping that when
"some neighbour once suggested we send our Tommy to her
"brother's at Little Muddy York so that he could attend
"Bizness Collidge—the gude wife said 'No—I know Tommy

"is smart at school and good at figures, but I won't have
"him sent to no Bizness Collidge."

"And when my gals, Polly and Jinny, wanted to start that
"ere milinery shop when they came back from down east—
"they wanted to borrow three hundred dollars from me to
"start bizness with. Says I to them: 'I have no objection
"to you gals bein, bizness people and keeping a sto'. But
"please keep yo' books Single Entry. If you keep them
"Double Entry—as they call it—instead of my having
"lent you three hundred dollars—I may find you have lent
"me six hundred.' Polly called me 'an old goose' and
"kissed me.

"But I know I wus right about that account of mine.
"Sometimes when I'm a following the team a plowin' I will
"go over the figures agin in my mind and I can't make 'em
"any different, no hows; I owed at the sto' \$40, and the sto'
"owed me for ten and a half tons of hay at \$7.50 per ton—
"\$78.75. Doesn't that leave me \$38.75?"

This was the gentleman—"old man Jackson" as he was
generally called—who now came out of the little railed-in
office and comes a-walking down the sto' playing with the
heavy seals on his watch chain as he walked—a little playful
habit he had.

"It's somethin' in the wholesale way, is it?" he asked,
addressing the gudeman and his wife and the two "furriners"
—who stood together "in a bunch," as it were.

"Well, Mr. Jackson, the fact is these two gentlemen are
"Furriners and they did wish to buy a Pedlar's Pack and a
"few Ribbons and Laces."

"Oh, I see," said the merchant, proceeding a little way
down the counter and commencing to take down some boxes
containing pretty Ribbons and opening them up to the admiring
eyes of all present; "here's some of the finest ribbons
"ever imported into this Continent of British North America,
"I do feel sure—real silk—woven by hand on the far-famous

*The translator does not know whether or not this is the same gentleman to whom reference is made in the beautiful verses:

"Ole Brer Jackson
"Fines't conpaction
"Fell down sta'srs
"Fer to gie satisfaction."

See "Uncle Remus—his songs and his sayings—the Folk Lore of the
Old Plantation" (Joel Chandler Harris) Chap. XXVIII "The End of
Mr. Bear).

"looms of Lyons—that is in France, you know. The house "in Mont Royale with whom I deal only import the very "best goods; all silk, you see. And I've most any width you "could want—and as to prices, I'll make the price very rea- "sonable. How many yards can you handle? Perhaps I had "better cut you some from each roll?"

"We are ever so much obliged," answered the Sieur. "We "would like to invest in a fair stock of Ribbons and also of "Laces—I suppose you have them also. It depends upon the "price and upon the extent of our yens."

"Yens! What are yens? my dear sir," asked the astonished merchant, adding—looking at his fair wife—"I never "heard of such things afore; did you, my dear?"

"No," answered that fair lady.

"Never heard of 'yens'—why, they are 'the current coin "of the Realm'—as we read in the School Books at School," answered M. Machelle.

"The current coin of the realm?" repeated the merchant. "Of what realm? This is a part of Great Britain, of course. "We are a Crown Colony under British rule—you know that?"

"Ah—to be sure—perhaps after all the yen will not pass "current here," the Sieur answered reflectively.

"Let us see one of 'em, anyway," asked the merchant, and the Sieur untied the heavy bag of coin which he had been carrying in his hand so far and so long. Then he put his hand in the bag and brought out to the admiring eyes of the merchant and his fair wife and the honest yeoman and his fair wife, a few shining yens, saying as he did so: "I fancy "they are alright—they're just as they came from the Bank. "I was in a hurry coming away and I sent a boy over to the "Bank with a cheque and asked him to bring me a bag full of "yens, and here they are."

"You're sure they are not counterfeit?" asked the merchant, his eye traveling instinctively towards the big placard of warning hanging up in the store.

"Oh, I guess not," answered the Sieur with a laugh.

"What Bank did you say?" pursued the cautious merchant. "The Traders' Bank of Mieauburg—they also have

"Branches or Agencies at other points: Catburg and Pussy-burg, and I think Tomlinson's Landing. It's a well-known Bank—one of the oldest in the Kingdom."

"It's a strange thing, but I do not seem to be able to recall the name: 'Traders' Bank of Mieauburg?' Wait a minute, kindly—I'll go into my office and get our Bank Directory; it gives the names of the leading Banks in 'Canady and the States and their European correspondents."

In a couple of minutes the merchant returned with the book in question—bound in red—and said: "I should easily be able to find 'Mieauburg' as the places are given in an Index—alphabetically—that's as they come, you know—"accordin' to their fust letter. Now let's see" (putting his big forefinger down on the page) "here's 'M'—now let's "see—Mieauburg—Mieauburg—Mieauburg—don't seem to be any such place. What's the name agin of those other "places you mentioned?"

"Catburg, Pussyburg, and Tomlinson's Landing. I am "not sure whether there is a Branch at the last place, but I "think there is."

The merchant wrote the names down with a pencil on a piece of wrapping paper which was lying before him, and then looked for the names. Then he rubbed his head again and said: "Pears like I must have heard tell of some of "those places."

"Are they well-known places?" he continued, looking at Machelle.

"Sure," answered that gentleman. "Mieauburg is the "Capital, you know—the Seat of Government. The Houses "of Parliament are there—the Noble and Hereditary House "of Sieurs and the Commons' House, you know."

"I must, of course, have read or heard tell of all them "things," said the merchant, "but I can't really place any of "em just now. And it is very strange I can't find any men- "tion of 'em in this Bank Directory. I pay three dollars a "year for this Book, and it must be right."

In the meantime the merchant's fair wife had been looking at the pretty coins—and all of a sudden she exclaimed:

"Why, King William isn't here at all—nor the late King

"George either! It's some other King—King Grim—Grim—"—I can't make out the letters very well."

"His Majesty King Grimalkin the First," said the Sieur. Whereat he and M. Machelle took off their caps.

"And on the other side is a Pussy Cat a-standing up on its hind legs on top of a Crown," continued the Lady.

"Why, certainly," said M. Machelle. "A Grimalkin—in other words a Pussie—*Rampant*—as the Heralds say—surmounting the Crown Royal."

"Well, all this seems very strange, but it must be alright. You gentlemen, I am sure, would not attempt to pass 'counterfeit money in this 'ere store. I noticed you reading 'the 'Warning' hung up. There may be such places as you say and such a King as you say. This Book may not be 'entirely complete, and this is a wonderful Age in which we 'live—to be sure. What is the name of the country from 'which you furriners have come?"

"The Land of the Grimalkins," promptly answered M. Machelle; "and a fair Land it is, to be sure."

"But, my dear," interposed his cautious wife, the trouble "is that even if you do take this bag of 'yens'—as I think the "gentlemen call 'em—or a certain number of them—what'll "we do with 'em? If your Wholesale Houses in Little Muddy York, Mont Royale, or Trois Rivieres will take "them in payment of your accounts or in part payment, well "and good. You could send 'em down next time you are "remitting. But if they won't take 'em—what can you do "with 'em? You could write to 'em and ask 'em, or you "could write to one of the Banks in those towns and ask 'em "what a 'yen' is worth—whether they pass current at par or "at a discount, and if so, what discount. If they won't take "em at all nothing could be done with 'em except perhaps to "send 'em to some place where they buy curious coins and "sich."

"I quite agree with you, Mrs. Jackson; you have spoken "like a prudent wife," said the Sieur.

"Aye, aye," said Machelle.

"Now I'll tell you what we'll do—with your permission"—continued the Sieur. "At present we will only give a

"very small order—one we may, perhaps, in a sense, be said to have received on our way hither this very morning. My friends here have the money—good undoubted money—with which to settle for the order. Then as to a Pedlar's Pack—you can perhaps lend us a big Valise or Portmanteau, which will answer for the nonce as a 'Pedlar's Pack.' As security for its return you may keep as many handfuls of the yens as you wish. We will either return the Valise within Ten Days from to-day, or we will buy it from you or else purchase a new one."

"Right glad we will be, sirs, to go thus far to oblige you," said the merchant. Then turning to his fair wife he added: "My Dear, will you kindly see if we have a valise or portmanteau or something which will answer for a Pedlar's Pack to lend these gentlemen-pedlars?"

"Certainly," said that lady, as she lightly tripped away.

"Now for the order, gentlemen," said the merchant briskly.

The Sieur handed him the order, which he read, after putting on his spectacles, and then said: "Why, that order is easily and quickly and cheaply filled. Our mottoes, you know—I saw you reading 'em—are 'Small Profits and 'Quick Returns'—and 'Live and Let Live.' Now, gentlemen, you perhaps had better let Mrs. Williamson pick out 'your Ribbons for you. The fair sex are better judges than we are of such things."

"Did you say the lady's name was 'Mrs. Williamson?'" asked M. Machelle.

"Why, certainly," answered that lady. "What did you think it was? By what name would you have called me if you had been speaking of me to some one else?"

"I think I would have probably called you," answered the gay Sessional Writer, "The Lady who owns the lovely 'pansy beds.'"

"And so would I," said the gallant Sieur. "And I would have called her good husband 'the honest yeoman who owns the two 'cow bossies.'" However, now we know your names, we will be able to call you 'Mr. and Mrs. Williamson'—that is, when we are speaking to others. Of course when we are speaking to one another we will probably still

"use the pretty and romantic appellations we have mentioned."

"Ha! Ha! Ha! Pretty good," laughed the gudeman and the merchant in unison.

"What funny folks you furriners are, to be sure!" said the fair gudewife.

Meanwhile the lady had picked out the ribbons she thought prettiest, and the merchant with his scissors had cut off the proportion required and had deftly and neatly done up the order in a small packet. Then the gudewife took out her purse and handed to the merchant the necessary funds. The merchant as he looked at the coin proffered him, said with a smile: "This is what you call 'good and lawful money of 'Canady.'" Then he added: "I will make out a little invoice of the goods and hand it to the gentlemen-pedlars." As he did so he said, "Gentlemen, this is my first Invoice or "Statement Current to your Firm. Hoping this will be the "beginning of a business between us which will be mutually "satisfactory and eminently profitable."

By this time his fair wife had returned, bearing a large Valise or Portmanteau. As she brought it to her husband she said: "My Dear, this is the only valise I can find. It "is one you take with you when you go down below some- "times to buy goods. You have not used it for over ten years "and it may be an equally long time afore you go below "again. You know we've found we can order our goods "equally well by letter, and it saves a big bill of expense."

"Right you are, my dear. I don't suppose I'll ever use "that valise again. I think it better to order goods by letter. "You know then just what you want and what you are or- "dering. But when one goes below to buy goods he is apt "to 'lose his head.'"

"How 'lose his head?'" asked the Sieur. "I don't understand."

"Well, you see, when a country merchant reaches Little "Muddy York, or Mont Royale, or Trios Rivieres—or any "other place, I suppose—'where merchants most do congre- "gate'—as they say in the old play*—his arrival soon be-

*"Merchant of Venice." —William Shakespeare. Act I. Scene 3.

"comes known. And "tween you and me and the lamp-post" "—as the saying is—he is treated a little bit too kindly—"made a little bit too much of. Now, suppose I reach the "town at four o'clock this arternoon—about seven o'clock, "when I have just finished my dinner and am smoking a "quiet pipe in my room—meaning to retire early, for I am "tired—a knock comes to the door and in comes a gentle- "man who shakes me cordially by the hand and says, afore "I can gasp for breath—so to speak: 'Mr. Jackson, the "well-known merchant of "The Corners"? How do you do, "sir? How have you enjoyed your long journey from the "great North Land? Really nice weather, isn't it? I "thought you might be a little lonesome, and I thought I "would just drop in and ask you if you would not accom- "pany me and some of "the boys" to the Theatre. Mac- "Fairson is going to take the part of The Ghost in Hamlet "and he makes a jolly good Ghost.' And so he drags me "away to the Theatre. Then when the Play is over he says: "I say, Jackson, I would like to take you over to "The Club" "and introduce you to some more of "the boys." And so "keeps me out of bed until three or four in the morning. "Then he leaves me to sleep. But he does not leave me for "long. About nine o'clock that morning, just when I am "finishing my breakfast, he calls on me and says, 'Can't you "ask the waiter to bring me a cup of coffee—I'll drink a "cup with you, if you'll be so kind.' Then after breakfast "we light our pipes and stroll down street, and, first thing "you know, he or his firm has got me booked for a hull lot of "things which I don't want and which remain on my shelves "unsold for ever so long. They mean well, of course, I sup- "pose; the goods look alright and are alright, and probably "are all just 'the style,' and are 'just in the prevailing "fashion'—as they assure me—and they probably would sell "like hot cakes' in some other locality; but they don't sell "well at 'The Corners'—as I find out—and so I am put to "more or less inconvenience, perhaps even loss, in the matter. "Now, I have found out that it pays me better to sit down in "my office here and write out a little order for what I want "and send the letter through His Majesty's mails—and have

"the goods come up the Lakes by the first convenient opportunity." Then the good-natured merchant added: "Well, "here's the Pedlar's Pack—you can have it for the ten days "or even a month, free of charge or rent. At the end of that "time you can return it, if you find the bizness of Peddling "an unprofitable Perfession. If you find there is money in "the bizness—why, you can give the Wholesale House of "Jackson et Cie a wholesale order in the lines or Ribbons "and Laces."

"And the yens?" asked the Sieur.

"Well—for the fun of it—I will write down to one of the "Banks below and find out the par value or the rate of dis- "count on the 'yen'—as you call it—or whether they are "negotiable in this country at all, and I will let you know "what they say. In the meantime, you could leave one or "two with my wife just to look at—as a souvenir or me- mento, so to speak."

"Thanks, ever so much, for your kindness," said the Sieur.

"Indeed, we are ever so much obliged," said the Sessional Writer.

Then the Sieur put his hand in the bag and took out a handful of shining yens and put them on the counter before the Merchant's Fair Wife and said: "In case it should be "that you should not see us Pedlars again—please keep "these as a little memento or souvenir of this very auspicious "occasion. If we stay in the country, of course we will "often call and see you."

"Well, now, we'll be a jogging along," said Mr. William- son. "Good-bye, all!"—

The farmer and his wife and the two gentlemen-peddlers cordially shook hands with the merchant and his fair wife, and then the journey home again began.

The Sieur before leaving the store, received from the merchant the little invoice mentioned. It was a lovely moonlight evening and it was a gay and merry party which traveled behind "Moll and Dobbin"—across the lowlands which fronted on the big river and up the hillside. About 9 o'clock the waggon stopped in front of the farm house from which had lie the order for the granulated sugar

and the tea. And at half-past ten "Moll and Dobbin" were thankfully and peacefully and restfully discussing a hearty supper of clover hay and a few oats by way of dessert—coupled with some lovely cool spring water by way of liquid refreshment—and at the same hour the four jolly travelers were discussing some lovely fresh-brewed tea—some nicely-broiled rashers of bacon coupled with freshly laid eggs—to which should be added the sweetest of home-made bread and the choicest of butter.

"I think I would like to board here all the time, Mrs. Williamson," said the Sieur.

"I know I would," said the Sessional Writer. Their kind friends had told the gentlemen-peddlers that they had a spare bed in their house and that they would take it as a kindness if the Furriners would make their house their "Home," whilst they were in that part of the country. For all of which the Ministers Plenipotentiary and Ambassadors Extraordinary were deeply grateful.

As the tired Sieur was just falling asleep he murmured to the equally tired Sessional Writer, "I enjoyed that ride so much—they are so kind—everybody here seems to be so kind—that is, of course, barring out 'Old Man Covet Grab'—whoever he is—but I think there is nothing like a 'stone-'hooker' as an easy method of transportation—you don't "feel the stones."

Then he continued dreamily, and ever-so-drowsily: "I think we see our way pretty clear before us now, don't we, "old fellow?"

To this the joint-Ambassador and joint-Minister answered very sleepily: "I am non-committal until I see the proposed Queen. I will let you know as soon as I see her, "my boy."

Then, half asleep, the Sieur answered: "I just love these "kind people—our host and hostess; we really must take "them back with us when we return; I fancy there will not "be much difficulty in the way—they love the Summertrees "family so much they would not wish to be parted from "them."

"I have already distinctly said that I am non-committal "until I see the proposed Queen"—murmured the Sessional

writer, half asleep;—then he sleepily continued: “How about ‘Moll and Dobbin’ and ‘the two cow-bossies’ and the ‘pansies? They could not leave them behind.”

“We’ll arrange all that,” sleepily answered the Sieur—‘I will think it over—perhaps dream about it. We’ll get ‘them through the Subterranean Channel somehow, never ‘fret.”

“I’m not fretting, old man, I’m feeling perfectly happy,” answered M. Machelle. “As I have said I am perfectly non-committal. But I just long to see that dark-eyed beauty; “I just love the Brunette style of beauty. But I am awfully “sleepy—and I am entirely non-committal.”

“Alright, old fellow, I think I prefer the Blonde style of “Beauty to the Brunette—but they are each lovely styles—“and I am sure each of ‘the Bonnie Leddies’ will be equally “winsome and equally lovely. So good night and ‘Vive La “Reine.’”

“Good night and ‘Vive La Reine,’ it is, but remember “I’m perfectly non-committal. I’ll tell you what I’ll do. As “soon as I see the proposed Queen—if I am satisfied I’ll “say ‘Vive La Reine’—if I am not satisfied I won’t. Do “you understand?”

“Yes, old boy,” sleepily answered the Sieur. “Then good “night again, and ‘Vive La Reine’—but in your dreams re-“member I’m perfectly non-committal.”

At eight o’clock the next morning the gentlemen-peddlars were sitting down to a comfortable breakfast with their host and hostess.

“How’s everything this morning, Mr. Williamson?” asked the Sieur.

“Perty well, thankee” replied the honest yeoman.

“How’s ‘the two cow bossies,’ Mrs. Williamson?” asked M. Machelle.

“They’re quite well, thankee. I have just milked them—“and they’ve gone down their trail to the big Lake agin.”

“And how’s our good friends ‘Moll and Dobbin’ this morning—after their long drive of yesterday?” asked the Sieur.

“Oh, they’re quite well, thankee; I’m not going to use “them to-day so they are ‘kicking up their heels’—as the

"saying is—in the pasture field beyant the barn," answered the host.

"Last but not least, fair hostess," said Machelle, "how are the pansy beds this beautiful morning?"

"I think they'll be alright—I'll get a bouquet in a few minutes for my gudeman and for each of you—if you like."

"To be sure we will, and thanks," said everybody.

Then the folks fell to talking about Summertrees and the dwellers there.

Said the gudewife—with a laugh—"Perhaps when 'the 'Bonnie Leddies' see you gentlemen-peddlars a-coming they may think their Fairy Tale is a-coming true and that 'you are the 'Princes in Disguise.'"

"'Princes in Disguise'?" repeated the Sieur.

"Yes, you see," continued the gudewife—"the Bonnie Leddies" have always been fond of reading Fairy Tales and "sich—and making up between themselves Fairy Tales like, "and in one of the Fairy Tales they have told me—I don't "know whether they made it up themselves or whether they "took it out of a book—two strange gentlemen come—in "fact, Furriners just like you gentlemen—I don't know as "they was peddlars, but that don't matter—and these Furriners turn out to be Princes in Disguise—a-wanderin from "their own country in search for a Queen."

"In search for a Queen," repeated the two 'Furriners'— "surely not!"

"Why yes," replied the gudewife, "and why not? The story "goes on to say that these two Princes in Disguise were sent "from some far distant country to select a Queen, and having "found her they take her back with them to their country "and she becomes a Queen. 'The Bonnie Leddies' have lots "of fun over the story. Of course they're only in fun—but "Old John believes it will all come true just as it is in the "story. The girls have lots of fun atween themselves as to "who shall be the Queen, but they long ago decided, I think "—or else perhaps it was Old John who decided for them—"that Miss Elfie—she's the Laird's Daughter, you know—is "to be the Queen and that Miss Retta is to be her Lady's "Maid or Maid in Waiting. You see, Miss Retta declares

"she would not let Miss Elfie go away without her—and "Miss Elfie she says—in fun, of course—that if she is offered a Crown and a Throne she will not take it except not "only Retta, but also all her very dear friends can go along, "too."

"That's only right, certainly," said the Sieur—"who are "Miss Elfie's very dear friends?"

"Well the Bonnie Leddie means, of course, Miss Retta—"and her father—the Laird, you know—and Old John—and "my gudeman and me. She says she will insist on taking "us with her when she goes. But of course it's all in fun. "It is only a Fairy Tale—just to pass away the time and "make fun like. But Old John says it will come true. When "I go over to-day I'm a-going to have some fun with 'the "Bonnie Leddies' about your Fairy Tale."

"It is a most remarkable co-incidence," said M. Machelle to the Sieur.

"I don't know about that," replied the gudewife, "but it "is a very pretty story and we've all had many a laugh over "it."

Not very long afterwards the gentlemen-pedlars started for Summertrees carrying between them their "Pedlar's Pack." The arrangement was that within as short a time as possible the gudeman and his fair wife were to follow the guests to Summertrees.

And thus it was that as recorded at the end of the first act of this Romance two sun-browned and wind-browned Pedlars marched into the Library at Summertrees—thus interrupting the grave and sad conversation in progress between the members of the Summertrees household—and a-crying in a deep basso-profundo-soprano, alto, contralto and mezzo-soprano tone of voice—as it were—

"We've Ribbons and Laces
"To set off the Faces
"Of pretty young Sweethearts and Wives!"*

"Oh Elfie, here are two Gentlemen-Pedlars," cried Miss Retta to Miss Elfie. "Isn't that nice?"

*"H. M. S. Pinafore"; Gilbert and Sullivan.

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“If we had known they were coming we need not have “sent our little order with Mrs. Williamson,” said Miss Elfie.

“Sit down, Gentlemen, and make yourselves at home,” said the kindly Laird, handing a chair to each of the visitors. “You must be tired—carrying that heavy pack. Have you “traveled far this mornnig, Gentlemen?”

“Not very far, sir, thank you,” answered the Sieur.

“But it is a warm day, gentlemen, and you must be tired “carrying that heavy Pedlar’s Pack,” said Miss Elfie, kindly. “Come on, Retta, let us go and get a cup of tea for the “gentlemen.”

“No, thank you, indeed,” replied the Sieur. “It is not “very long since we had breakfast, and we really have not “traveled far this morning. You are all very kind.”

“*Vive La Reine!*” said M. Machelle, in a loud under-tone to his Joint Minister Plenipotentiary and Joint Ambassador Extraordinary.

“*Vive La Reine!*” answered the Sieur.

Everyone in the room heard the words, but did not at all understand what was meant, and looked at one another in a perplexed sort of way.

“Cannot we show you, young Ladies, some of our Laces—“our stock in trade—as it were?” asked the Sieur presently.

“Why, certainly, if you would be so kind—and if it would “not be too much trouble. But, oh, perhaps you had better “not—I forgot we do not need anything in the way of Rib-“bons and Laces just now. You see, yesterday morning a “good friend of ours and her husband were going to ‘The “‘Corners’ and we asked the lady kindly to purchase a few “Ribbons for us at one of the Stores there. It was probably “late when they reached home—it is a long journey to ‘the “‘Sue’—as some folks call it—and the roads are rough; so “I suppose our friend could not very well bring us the Rib-“bons last night. But we expect them over to-day. They “are really very nice people and very kind. So you see we “would be putting you to a great deal of trouble for “nothing.”

“Ev’ry firm has a Business Motto, or should have one. “We understand Mr. Jackson at ‘the Sue,’ or ‘the Corners’

"—whichever it is—has two Business Mottoes. Ours will "be—eh, Pardner?" (looking at M. Machelle—who was looking at Miss Retta)—"No trouble to show Goods."

"I guess that'll be alright," answered the Sessional Writer, apparently waking up out of a reverie.

"Well, then 'here goes'—as the saying is"—said the Sieur, as he proceeded to undo the fastenings of the big leathern Portmanteau, whilst all the occupants of the Library gathered round and watched the operation with curious eyes.

Having undone the fastenings, the Sieur opened wide the big valise. It contained two large compartments. In the one firstly opened was a small, neatly-folded little packet—in the other were two little slips of paper—one neatly folded and twisted as if by fair, feminine hand.

"You must have got nearly sold out, gentlemen—or else 'been robbed on the way,'" said the Laird pleasantly.

"I thought by the vay you 'uns carried that Pack when 'you came in that it we ghed most half a ton!" said old John.

Then everyone laughed.

"Well," said the Sieur, "one thing is certain—we cannot 'show you what we have not got, can we? Now, let us see 'what is in this little packet."

Then the gallant Sieur opened the packet and displayed to the admiring eyes of everyone three pieces of silk ribbon, each a yard long and respectively of the colors blue, pink and crimson, and each three-quarters of an inch wide.

"Your stock seems to have got reduced to some extent, "gentlemen," said the Laird pleasantly.

"I am so sorry," said Miss Retta to M. Machelle, who could not help looking at her very often—in fact, old John afterwards declared M. Machelle looked at Miss Retta constantly and without intermission from the time the gentlemen-pedlars came into the room—but then old John always was a great fellow to joke—"that we sent away our order "yesterday. You gentlemen seem to have got exactly the "colour and shade of ribbon we ordered yesterday—and ex- "actly the length and exactly the width."

"It is apparently one of those peculiar circumstances

"which you might call a 'co-incidence,'" said her father, laughing.

"I don't understand it at all," said old John, a-gazing curiously into the cavernous depths of the big valise. "It 'beats all,'" he added, a-rubbing his head.

"Perhaps if we look in this other compartment or room, 'the mystery may be unraveled,'" said the Sieur.

Then he shut to the first compartment and opened the second—the one on the left hand side.

"Now, Ladies and Gentlemen," continued the Sieur, as if he were a showman addressing an audience, "I have in my 'hands two small pieces of paper. One reads as follows—'that is to say, in the manner and in the words and figures following—videlicet—to wit:

"'I yard blue ribbon $\frac{1}{4}$ in. wide.

"'I do. pink " do. do.

"'I do. crimson " do. do.'

"Why, that is exactly the order I gave yesterday—and I believe that is the very paper I wrote, too. Please let me 'see it, won't you?" asked Miss Elfie.

"Certainly, here it is, my Liege," answered the gallant Sieur, handing the young lady the paper and bowing low.

"I wonder what he means by calling Miss Elfie 'my 'Liege,'" said old John to the Laird in a loud undertone. "But he means well anyway—and he said it wery perlitey. "Perhaps them are furriners and it may be a furrin word."

"Why, this is exactly the same order which I wrote out "yesterday morning and gave to old John to hand to Mrs. Williamson! Didn't I, old John?"

"Sartainly," answered that gentleman, a-rubbing his head hard and speaking in a very perplexed sort of way.

"Are you sure you gave my note to Mrs. Williamson, old "John?" continued Miss Elfie.

"Sartainly," answered old John. "Sartainly." Then the old man bent down low and peered anxiously into the cavernous depths of the big Leathern Valise—then he cautiously put his hand into one compartment and then into the other and felt them.

"I was feeling to see whether it was a *real* walise or only

"an imaginary one," explained old John to the amused spectators. "You see, the hull thing seems to me like a Fairy Tale—like one of those Fairy Tales 'the Bonnie Leddies' tell us about sometimes. Here suddenly come two strange 'gentlemen-pedlars—jist as if they had come out of a book—"they are apparently 'furriners' by their accent—then they bring with them a big Pedlars' Pack which seems so heavy "when they come in that it takes the two of them to carry it—"it 'peared to me to weigh at least half a ton—then they open it and what's in it? Nothing, as I can see, but this little wee packet of ribbons—the very ribbons which 'the 'Bonnie Leddies' ordered yesterday; that is on this side of the walise—and on the other side there is nothing but two little pieces of paper, and one on 'em is the very identical "note Miss Elfie wrote with her own hand and gave me yesterdays mornin' to give to Miss Williamson—and I did give it to her sure. It beats all—that it does—it beats the Dutch—"as the sayin' is."

Then amidst the loud and repeated laughter of all present the old man carefully examined the interior of the valise again and exclaimed :

"I know what it is; it's magic. These gentlemen are Conjurers—Magicians. You folks had better look out." Here the old man commenced to 'edge away' from the circle, saying: "I've heard tell of conjurers and magicians afore. They do say they can do most anything. You'd better look out. "They say there was a magician once came and gave a show "at 'the Corners' and he could do most anything—make a fire in his stove-pipe hat and not burn it up—make all sorts "of things come outen of it—lots of things—dozens of hand-kerchiefs, and aprons, and all sorts of things—and even "eggs—and they do say even a live Chicken he brought out "of that hat and it a burning 'like Sam Hill'—as the saying "is—all the time. I say this hull bizness is magic and these gentlemen are not Pedlars at all—they are Conjurers and "Magicians. You want to look out. You 'Bonnie Leddies' once read to me about sich people in 'The Arabian "Nights.' "

Here everyone laughed heartily, and the Laird said: "I fancy it is only a co-incidence and not magic."

"I don't know nothing 'bout any coincidence or any 'magic,'" said the gude wife, who had stolen on tip toe into the room, followed by her gudeman—also on tip toe—and who had been interested spectators of the more recent proceedings, and interested auditors of old John's eloquence, "but, my gudeman and me knows these furriners well—they are real friends of ours—and they are stopping at our 'house. They only left there about a couple of hours ago—"or so—and the very bouquets they wear are from our "Pansy Beds." Then the good lady, more particularly addressing "the Bonnie Leddies," continued: "You know we always calls 'em *our* Pansy Beds—that is, yourn as well as ourn—because they are really more yourn than ourn."

Then the gude wife continued: "Them's your own ribbons, 'Bonnie Leddies; the fac' is thet these gentlemen-pedlars "rode in with my gudeman an' me to the 'Sue', yesterday. "They had bin intandin' to lay in quite a stock of Ribbons "an' Laces fur to start with in their Perfession—but when it "came to the buyin' of 'em it turned out that tho' they had "lots of money—a hull bag full in fac'—it was no use—their "money was not of the right kind—and so they had to wait "a while afore they could lay in what you might call a "wholesale stock. On our way down I handed 'em yo little "order—thinking they might like to fill it, seein' they wuz "goin' into the Ribbon bizness. I knew you would not "mind—"

"Certainly not" said the 'Bonnie Leddies'—

"And so the only Ribbons they bought were these Ribbons "which I paid for out of yo' own money—and here's the "change, my dears"—here the gudewife handed to Miss Elfie the change—"and my gudeman has the tobacco which "was ordered"—here that gentleman produced the article mentioned—"and the gentlemen-pedlars has the bill—or the "invoice," as I think Brer Jackson called it—of the Ribbons.' "

"Here, my Liege, certainly, is the 'invoice' or 'statement "current'—or whatever the merchant called it," said the

Sieur—handing to Miss Elfie the other little paper which was in the left hand compartment of the Pedlar's Pack.

"Well, Old John," said the Laird with a gay laugh, "you see I was right for once and you were wrong for once: it was not magic—only a peculiar co-incidence."

"I guess you were right and I was wrong, 'as you generally are—as the old saying is—Laird," replied Old John, also laughing.

"I don't quite understand about the money, though, Mrs. Williamson: why would not the merchant—Mr. Jackson, I presume—take the gentlemen's money?"

"Well you see Laird," said the gudeman, "it was what is apparently called 'Yens.'"

"Yens?" repeated the Laird.

"Yes; that is what the gentlemen called it—and here is 'a hull bag of it'—here the gudeman produced the little bag of Yens—"You see, I noticed, after the gentlemen had started for Summertrees this mornin' that they had left 'behind 'em their bag of 'Yens'—and I've took the liberty "to tote it along thinkin' that as you, Laird, are a larned "man you might perhaps be able to tell these furriners how "much a 'Yen' is worth in this country, or if it is worth anything."

"We are ever so much obliged to you, friend Williamson," said the Sieur, as he took the little bag from the hand of the gudeman. Then he opened the bag and laughingly handed it round to each of the persons present, commencing with Miss Elfie—saying as he did so: "I wish this was a bag of "candies I was handing around—eh, Machelle?—but it "can't be helped."

"What strange looking coins they are!" said the Laird, scrutinizing one carefully—"I never saw any coins like "them before."

"You are sure they are not counterfeits?" asked Old John—"they do say Brer Jackson is very much opposed to coun-terfeite conis."

Miss Elfie said, "I think they are real pretty—don't you, "Retta?"

"Yes," that lady said; "but who is the good-looking gen-tleman on the coin?"

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"You can see his name engraved around his portrait," answered the Sieur. "His Majesty Grimalkin the First—but it is not a good picture at all—it does not 'flatter' him"—so to speak. One who had seen him would not know "him again from his picture, as it appears on the coins and on the postage stamps of the Realm. In fact I was joking "him about the matter the other day and I told him the picture was as bad as the pictures one sometimes sees in Patent "Medicine advertisements—you know the ones to which I "refer, Laird—the 'before taking' and 'after taking' kind."

"You know His Majesty personally, then?" enquired Miss Elfie.

"Why, yes, my Liege, we are—I am proud to say—close "friends, and have been close friends for years. My friend "here, M. Machelle, also."

Then the Sessional Writer added:

"The fact is, my Liege, if my friend the Sieur D'Ulric "and myself were not such close friends of His Majesty, we "would not be here to-day. The important duty which has "been placed in our hands might have been entrusted to "others."

As well can be imagined, the last few words had made a great impression on each of the listeners—they stood bewildered—not in the least being able to understand the mysterious words. Old John seemed utterly perplexed and kept rubbing his head and then his eyes as if to be sure he was wide awake. As he afterwards explained to Mrs. Williamson, he felt really "flabbergasted"—as the saying is.

"May I then ask who you gentlemen really are?" said the Laird courteously. "May I also ask why you—each of you—"have addressed my daughter as 'my Liege.' "

Miss Retta here interposed by saying: "Uncle, this may be "a rather long narration or story; suppose we all adjourn to "the verandah and all you gentlemen can light your pipes—"I know you are all anxious to smoke—and the tobacco "smoke will perhaps keep away any insects from the Geraniums and other house-flowers Elfie and I have put out on "the verandah" (this with a gay laugh—in which everyone joined).

After the whole of his auditory had adjourned to the cozy verandah, on which the Library opened, the Sieur D'Ulric proceeded as follows:

"Certainly—my Liege, Ladies and Gentlemen—it is only right that my friend and I should state who we are and why we have journeyed hither from the far-distant Land of the Grimalkins."

"The Land of the Grimalkins?" interposed the Laird.

"Yes, Laird, you will see those words imprinted on the coin you hold in your hand. Perhaps I had better at once 'plunge *'in medias res'*—as the saying is."

"What learned words these furriners use," said the Gude Wife to Old John in a loud under-tone. That gentleman was, however, too much bewildered—or "flabbergasted," as he afterwards said—to pay proper attention to the under-tone.

The Sieur smiled pleasantly at the Gude Wife and continued:

"We are not pedlars—we are Ministers Plenipotentiary and Ambassadors Extraordinary."

"Oh, my!" said Old John, "will you listen to that? What's a comin' now?"

After everyone had finished laughing the Sieur proceeded:

"A few nights ago His Majesty, King Grimalkin the First of the Fair Land of the Grimalkins, announced to both Houses of Parliament his wish and intention to resign; in other words, to retire from the Throne, and the Crown, and the Coins, and the Postage Stamps of the Realm; and furthermore, he resigned in favor of a Queen."

"Pears to me," interrupted Old John, a-rubbing his head—"this story is a-commencing in a way to resemble that Fairy Tale you 'Bonnie Leddies' sometimes tell."

"Hush, please, Old John," said Miss Retta. "We are so anxious to hear this story—it certainly commences to sound like a Fairy Tale."

Then the Sieur continued—smiling pleasantly at Old John. "His Majesty, however, resigned in favor of a Queen "who was not known to him—in fact, he resigned in favor

"of a Queen thereafter to be chosen and elected; and what "is more, he resigned that the Queen be chosen and elected "from *without* the Land; in other words, no Lady living "within the limits of the Land of the Grimalkins was to be "eligible for the office."

"I'm pretty sure this is very much like your Fairy Tale, " 'Bonnie Leddies,'" interrupted Old John.

"I'm commencing to think so, too," added the Gude Wife.

Smiling pleasantly at the Gude Wife and Old John, the Sieur proceeded:

"The King in announcing to the Assembled Houses of Parliament his wish and intention to retire in favour of a Queen to be chosen from without the Land stated that he "wished that the choice and election be left in the hands of "myself and my friend, M. Machelle."

"Why, of course, my dears," interposed the Gude Wife—"this is your Fairy Tale come true—these gentlemen are not "Pedlars at all—they are the 'Princes in Disguise' you have "often told us about!"

"Aye! Aye—I guess that's it alright," said Old John.

Smiling pleasantly at the beaming face of the Gude Wife and the bewildered face of Old John, the gallant Sieur proceeded:

"A Resolution was unanimously passed by both Houses "of Parliament in Congress Assembled—the Noble and "Hereditary House of Sieurs—and the Commons' House—"accepting with deep regret the resignation of his Majesty "and vesting in my friend and myself the appointment; in "other words, a Resolution was unanimously passed by both "Houses of Parliament appointing my friend and myself "Joint Ministers Plenipotentiary and Ambassadors Extra—"ordinary with—with what power, old man?" the Sieur "asked turning to the Sessional Writer.

That gentleman solemnly said, and as if he were reading something out of a Book:

"To proceed without the Realm and there to elect and "choose and make choice of a Faire Ladye, or a Brunette "Ladye as the Queen of the Land of the Grimalkins, and "having elected and chosen and made choice of the Faire

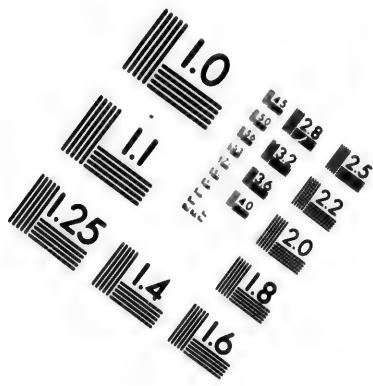
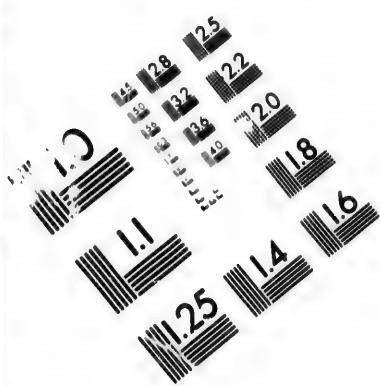
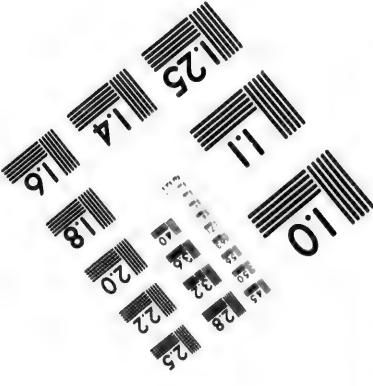
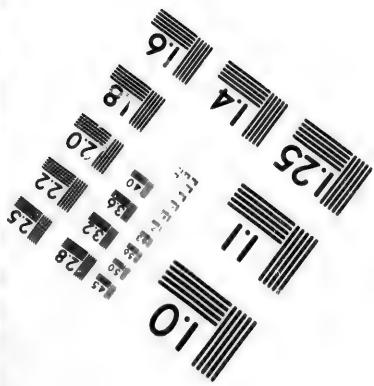
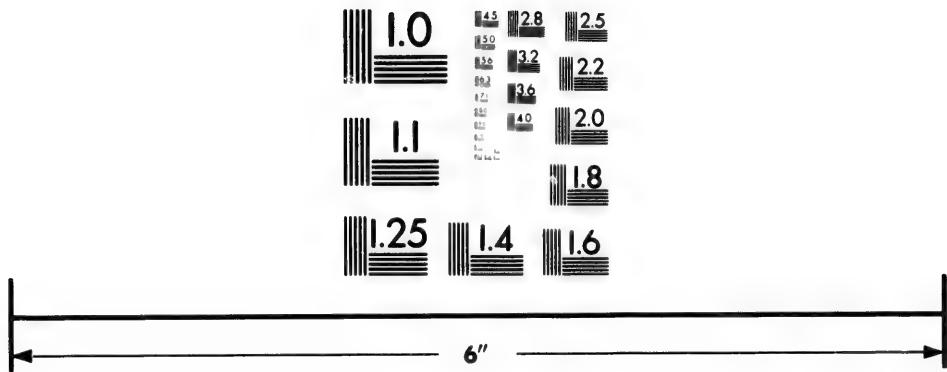


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"or Brunette Ladye aforesaid, to lead and conduct her—
"her consent firstly being thereunto obtained—to the
"Throne of the Land aforesaid amidst the plaudits of a
"happy People."

Then the Sessional Writer again relapsed into silence.

"Hear! Hear!" cried the genial Sieur, "M.. Machelle,
"you've got that off 'Pat'—as the saying is."

"Hear! Hear!" cried Old John. "The Fairy Tale is cer-
"tainly comin' true!"

"I do not know," continued the Sieur, "that I need add
"anything further except to say that we rejoice in the fact
"that we have been able so quickly and speedily to fulfil the
"grave and responsible duties entrusted to us—at any rate
"the first part of our duties—the making choice of a Queen
"and so, My Liege" (here the Sieur arose from his seat and
bowed low before Miss Elfie—the Sessional Writer also
arose and bowed low) "nothing remains for us to do at this
"present moment but to congratulate ourselves and the Fair
"Land of the Grimalkins on our unanimous choice and to
"cry:

"'Vive La Reine!'"

"'Vive La Reine!'" repeated the Sessional Writer.

At this juncture a most affecting incident occurred: Old John threw himself at the feet of the Queen-Elect and cried, "Oh, Miss Elfie—I mean Your Majesty—when you go to "your new Kingdom, please don't leave Old John behind. It "would be so lonely here without you. You know I've al- "ways been with you; when you were a little wee babie—a "little wee lambie like—I nursed you on my knee—please "take Old John with you when you go!"

Then the old man continued with impetuosity and speak-
ing rapidly and very much in earnest:

"You remember, I have alwuz believed that Fairy Tale
"you 'Bonnie Leddies' have so often and so prettily told.
"I alwuz said the 'Princes in Disguise' would come from a
"foreign country and that you would be yet a Queen over
"some fair Land—and you know I alwuz reminded you that
"you must take us all with you—all those you love."

The Queen-Elect was crying partly from joy that now all her father's troubles were over and for ever—and partly out of sympathy with the faithful old man. She arose from her chair and assisted Old John to rise, saying kindly to him as she put her arms round his neck: "Old John, as I often have said—if that Fairy Tale ever did come true I would never 'go away unless I could take with me all those I love so well; and you are one—you know you are, Old John."

The Queen had no sooner sat down than the Gude Wife came softly to her and putting one arm around her neck and with her other hand caressingly stroking her fair, golden hair, half-crying and half-laughing, said: "Oh, Miss Elfie, 'I'm so glad that Fairy Tale has come true. I said to the 'Gudeman that I was sure these Furriners were distinguished men in their own country—and it was only this morning at breakfast time I was talking about that pretty 'Fairy Tale and I meant to mention it to you to-day and to 'ask you whether these gentlemen may not be 'the Princes 'in Disguise' you've told us about.' Then the Gude Wife added: "When you go—don't forget the Gudeman and me—"it would be so lonesome without your merry laugh."

Then the beautiful Retta went over to the Queen-Elect and said sweetly: "I suppose, Elfie, darling, I must learn "to call you, like these gentlemen, 'My Liege'—but it will "take me some time to say that. Oh, Elfie, dear, I'm so "glad—not only for your own sake—but for Uncle's sake!"

Here Old John interrupted by exclaiming: "What care "we for the Old Miser? A fig for all old Misers! Didn't "I always say so?"

"You certainly did make use of some such an expression, "Old John," replied the Laird—smiling pleasantly at the faithful old servant.

Then the Laird said to the Sieur:

"Am I to understand that you gentlemen are 'Princes in "Disguise'?"

"We are not 'Princes,'" answered M. Machelle; "there "are no 'Princes'—so called in our country. This gentle- "man is the nearest approach to a 'Prince' we have—he be- "ing a 'Sieur'—and as such a member of 'the Noble and

" 'Hereditary House of Sieurs,' as it is formally called. It "is the Upper House in Parliament. I am only a plain coun- "try gentleman—in other words, I am a Sheep Rancher on "the Blue Mountains when at home. In order to be near my "friend our comrade as much as possible, some years "ago I obtained through the kind offices of my friend and "the equally kind assistance of His Majesty, the position of "Sessional Writer in 'the Noble and Hereditary House of " 'Sieurs,' and so throughout the sittings of Parliament I am "still enabled to be near my friend."

"I should add to my friend's statements," said the Sieur, with a kindly smile, "that I also am 'a plain country gentle- " "man'—to quote my friend's words—and I can also say "with him that 'I am a Sheep Rancher on the Blue Moun- " "tains when at home.'"

"How romantic!" said Miss Retta.

"Perhaps it might interest these fair ladies—I should say "Her Majesty, and Miss Retta and Mrs. Williamson"—said M. Machelle—"if we were to mention the fact that His pres- " "ent Majesty is so much in love with the simple, plain, coun- "try life of a Sheep Rancher on the Blue Mountains, that— "as he himself announced in Parliament the other night—he "intends hereafter—and to use his own very words—if I "remember rightly—and to speak *verbatim et literatim*, and "to quote *ipsissinca verba*. The fact is, your Excellency, " "Nobles and Gentlemen Commoners, I wish to be a Sheep " "Rancher and to tend my sheep on the Blue Mountains.' "

"How romantic, indeed," murmured 'the Bonnie Led- " "dies.'

"These Furriners use a powerful lot of learned words— " "don't they, Old John?" said Mr. Williamson to the faithful old servant.

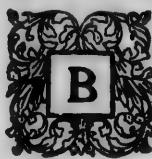
Old John only answered—speaking partly to himself and partly to his friend: "I alluz said that that 'ere purty Fairy "Tale would come true—and so it has!"

Act IV.

THE JOURNEY TO THE THRONE.

SCENE: First in the Wilds of New Ontario; then in the Subterranean Channel leading from Lake Superior into the Land of the Grimalkins.

TEMPORE: King William the Fourth, of England, and King Grimalkin the First, of the Land of the Grimalkins.



Y this time it had got pretty well on in the afternoon and Miss Retta jumping up said: "May it please your Majesty, and everyone, Old John "and I will go and get Lunch—if you will "excuse us."

Miss Elfie said, laughing merrily, "I am not a "Queen yet—except, perhaps, I may be one of the Queens "of this Household. And I will go with you, Retta, dear, "and help you get Lunch."

"But, my Liege, you mustn't think of such a thing," said Retta laughing—"the very idea of a Queen getting Lunch "for anybody!"

"All I can say, Retta, dear, is this: "If the fact of my being a Queen-Elect is going to prevent me assisting you "and Old John in the discharge of our household duties "whilst we remain at Summertrees—then I'll do the same as "his present Majesty has done, or rather—I will resign my "present position as Queen-Elect."

Of course Miss Elfie laughed merrily when she said these words, but everyone knew she meant what she said, and so with a courteous bow to those present, the Queen-Elect went off to the kitchen arm-in-arm with Miss Retta and Old John.

M. Machelle followed Miss Retta with his eyes as long as he could see her, and then when the trio had disappeared in the distance he turned to the Gude Wife and said: "Do you "think I could be of any assistance out there in the way of "putting on a fire or anything like that? I am a great hand "at building a Camp Fire quickly—as the Sieur there "knows."

"A Camp Fire quickly—as the Sieur there knows."

"Well, come along, sir," said the Gude Wife. "I'll take you out to the kitchen and I'll tell 'the Bonnie Leddies' you wish to help them. Come along with me."

So, taking the arm which the Sessional Writer gallantly offered her the Gude Wife proceeded to the kitchen and said to the astonished trio who were busily at work preparing Luncheon:

"This gentleman wished to know whether he could not help 'the Bonnie Leddies' get Lunch ready. He thought perhaps he could build a fire in the kitchen stove pretty quickly. At any rate he says he is a good hand to build 'Camp Fires.'

The trio laughed merrily and Miss Retta said: "I'm afraid Old John would be jealous if any one were to usurp 'his place.'

Old John, by the way, had already built a fire and got the kettle on—and in a few minutes it was singing merrily.

"You can stay and watch us if you like"—said the Queen Elect—"but we can't promise to give you anything to do."

In a few minutes the Gudeman strolled out and when the guests went in to Luncheon the Sessional Writer had the honour of leading into the dining room the fair Brunette.

On the way in he managed to say:

"I understand in the Fairy Tale you are to be Lady in 'Waiting to the Queen.'"

"I hope so," said Miss Retta—"it would be so lonesome without Elfie."

"When you become Lady in Waiting to Her Majesty," said the Sessional Writer, "I hope you won't become so proud and haughty as not to speak to a plain country gentleman, a simple sheep rancher from the Blue Mountains, if we should happen to meet any time."

The winsome girl laughed merrily, but made no promise one way or the other. All she said was:

"M. Machelle, I can't make any rash promises."

In the meantime the Sieur and the Laird had been left alone.

As soon as the Sessional Writer had left the room the Sieur said: "I'll tell you what we can be doing to 'while

"away the time"—as the saying is—until the folks return: "if you will kindly get me a sheet of note paper I will draw "for Her Majesty and in fine for you all a rough map or "sketch showing roughly and of course only approximately "the position of the leading towns in the Kingdom—and I "will show the classic Cattawaul River—and also the beau- "tiful Blue Mountains which I have mentioned."

"Thank you, Sieur," said the Laird, "come into the Library and I will get you some paper and a pen and ink. "If you will kindly prepare such a rough sketch as you "mention it would enable us all in a few minutes, I am "sure, to learn a good deal about your country."

So in a few minutes the Sieur was hard at work with the pen which the Laird lent him, and before long he had prepared a rough map or sketch on the lines he had indicated.

The party had a merry Lunch during which the Laird made the announcement that the Sieur had kindly made a rough sketch or map roughly showing the leading features of the fair Land of the Grimalkins.

"Yes," said the Sieur, "but it is very rough—and only "shows the features approximately, as one might say. "However, we can use it—as it were—as an 'object lesson' "—and after Lunch is over I will be glad to give you—with "the help of the rough map and with the help of M. Mach- "elle—a rough idea of our country—and its geography, or "should I say topography?"

"These furriners use very learned words—don't they, Old "John?" said the Gude Wife.

"Sartainly," said that gentleman, "but I always said— "didn't I—that that Fairy Tale would come true, and so it "has, hasn't it?"

"You are a dear old goose!" said Miss Retta.

"You are and always have been our good friend," said the Queen Elect.

After Luncheon was over the merry party gathered around the Library Table and the Sieur produced the rough map he had drawn* and taking a pencil in his hand as a pointer began his Lecture on the Tracing Board as follows:

*See Frontispiece.

"This, my fair Liege, Ladies and Gentlemen is a rough "outline map, as it were, of the Fair Land of which you, "my Liege, are already—as one may say—Queen *de jure*, if not *de facto*."

"Hear! Hear!" said the Sessional Writer.

"Them Furriners use very learned words, Old John, "don't they now?" said the Gude Wife to the faithful old servant, who was leaning over the Library Table staring very hard at the map—in fact, he was so much pre-occupied that he did not hear the remark made by the Gude Wife—but the Sieur heard it—and he gave a kindly smile to Mrs. Williamson as he proceeded with his Exemplification:

"This is the classic Cattawaul River, which flows through "the land from North to South—as it were—and which is "the great Artery of Commerce in the Land—as one might "say—the great Highway of Commerce. Some folks say "that when the proposed Railways are finished and running "there will not be so much business done on the River as "in former times, but I do not know as to that. Here, you "see, are the projected lines of Railway—two great Trunk "Lines, as it were—'Le Grand Sud Chemin de Fer'— "already in course of construction—to start at the Capital "—here—Mieauburg—and to run down this way to the "Shore at Catburg West and then to deflect a little and run "this way South to the Shore line at a point opposite the "rising City of Pussyburg. I think the intention is to put "on a large Ferry between Catburg East and Catburg West "—and another one between the Railway Station opposite "Pussyburg and that important town. Then the projected "‘Le Grand Occident Chemin de Fer’ will start from Cat—"burg West and run westerly into the fertile District of "Pussantra:—the country where the fragrant tea and the "fragrant tobacco grow so well, you know, Old John," added the Sieur, addressing the faithful servant.

"Maybe, sur—in fac' if you gentlemen say so I'll believe "it—but I never heard of any of those foine places afore."

Then, of course, everyone laughed.

The Laird then said: "I suppose these proposed Lines "of Railway—or *Les Chemins de Fer*—will be somewhat

"similar to the line of Railway which I hear is being built, "or perhaps may already have been built, between the "Cities of Manchester and Liverpool in England. It is "said that a big railway—in fact, what you called a 'Trunk' "Line—is to be built between the towns of Quebec and "Mount Royale—in fact, I think it is proposed to continue "it to Little Muddy York one of these days; it is to be called "Le Grand Trunk."

"Probably," said the Sieur. "Our 'railways'—as they call "them—exist as yet only on paper and in Acts of Parliament concerning which our friend here—the Sessional "Writer—could tell you."

Then he continued—illustrating and punctuating—as it were—his remarks with his pencil as he proceeded:

"This, then is the Capital—where the Houses of Parliament meet—where the Royal Palace is—where His Majesty King Grimalkin resides and where you, my fair Liege, "will reside, I hope, in the very near future."

"Oh, my!" said Retta.

"Fancy the loikes of that," said Old John. "Didn't I "always say that Fairy Tale would come true?"

"The Royal Palace," continued the Lecturer, "as well as "the new Houses of Parliament front on a beautiful Square "or Park, of which the Citizens of Mieauburg are justly "proud—called 'the Big Square.' There are spacious ver- "andahs around the Palace—from the easterly verandah you "can get a good view, not only of the blue waters of the "classic Cattawaul as it flows past the town—but also in "the distance you can get a pretty view of the hazy outline "of the famous Blue Mountains. Oh, they are really lovely "—here they are, you see."

"They seem to be called 'The Backbone Range,' on this "map," said the Laird.

"That is only another name for the Blue Mountains; the "latter name is prettier—don't you think so, my Liege and "Ladies?" asked the gallant Sieur.

"Certainly it sounds more romantic," said the Queen-Elect.

"More picturesque," said Miss Retta.

"My friend and I"—continued the Sieur—resuming his Lecture on the Tracing Board—"are such lovers of the Blue Mountains, and in fact of the Beautiful in Nature, that "perhaps I had better not say anything more concerning the Blue Mountains or you may think we are too poetical to be practical—in fact, you may commence to think we are so romantic in our ideas as to be unfitted for the very grave and very solemn and very practical position and office to which we have been appointed—that of Ministers Plenipotentiary and Ambassadors Extraordinary."

"Not at all," said the Queen Elect.

"Not at all—we just love Poetry and Romance," said Miss Retta.

"And we too love the Beautiful in Nature," added the fair Queen-Elect.

"When you come to know our friend and comrade, His Majesty King Grimalkin the First, you probably may hear from his lips an eloquent description of the Beauties of the Blue Mountains; he is so much in love with them that "he is coming down from off his Throne and from off his place on the Yens and postage stamps of the Nation to become a simple dweller in yon Blue Mountains."

"Isn't that Romantic—I hope we shall soon meet His Majesty," said Miss Retta.

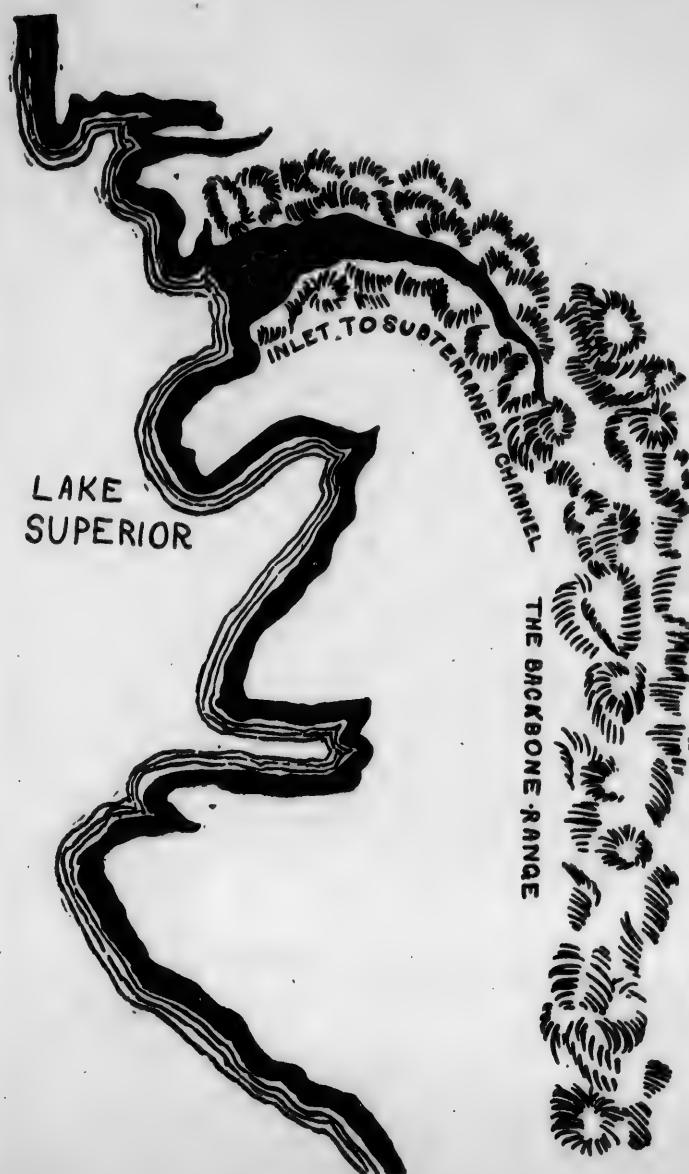
"I think His Majesty must have the heart of the true Poet," said the Queen Elect. "I shall also be very pleased to meet him."

"His Majesty is indeed a Poet—a true Lover of the Beautiful in Nature," said M. Machelle, "a large-hearted, noble-minded man—a man every inch of him—as the saying is."

Then the Sieur added: "My Liege, on your journey to your Throne you will meet—and I hope the meeting will take place before long—another 'Child of Nature'—another Lover of the Beautiful in Nature—another true Poet—our friend Oscar the Sage."

"'Oscar the Sage?'" repeated the Laird. "Who is he?"

"He is a Savant, a Sage, a Philosopher, a Poet, who loves so well the Beauties of Nature—who loves so well the Blue Mountains that some years ago he went back into the



"inner recesses of the Mountains back of the Capital and "became a dweller there—his home is right on the very "Height of Land," as it is called—just above here, my "Liege, Ladies and Gentlemen. In fact, but for the kind "services of 'Oscar the Sage'—the Hermit of the Moun- "tains—as some of the country folk call him—we would "not, in all probability, be here to-day. He it was who dis- "covered the secret of the Subterranean Channel."

"The Subterranean Channel?" What Channel do you "mean, Sieur?" enquired the host.

"Well, one would have thought you folks round here "would know all about it; the Inlet is not far from here— "on the Lake Shore, you know," replied the Sieur.

"I don't remember to have heard of any Inlet to any Sub- "terranean Channel down along the shore—though I know "the coast pretty well," said the Laird.

Then he continued—addressing Old John and the Gude- man and his wife: "Do you folks know of any Subterranean Channel or any Inlet to one—down along the Shore "of the Big Lake?"

"I'll tell you, Laird," said Old John, "what the Sieur—as "you call him—may mean; you know the Cave or the "Cavern down on the Shore near the mouth of Kelly's "Creek—what they sometimes call—or used to call years "ago—'the Smuggler's Cave?'"

"Ah, yes, I remember now—what about it, Old John?" said the Laird.

"Well, they do say that Cave runs a long way into the "mountain and that you could take a boat or a canoe quite "a long way in—I don't know how far; I never went in to "see—and I never heard tell of any one who did; it is all "dark in there—can't see nothing. It is quite a big open- "ing—perhaps that is the Inlet the gentleman is telling "about; if he would take me to the place and show me I "could soon tell, of course, whether we are talking about the same place."

"Let me show you a little sketch or picture of the place, "Old John," said the Sieur, "is this the place?" (Here the Sieur took from his Note Book the little rough sketch*

*See Sketch preceding page.

which he had made to show Oscar the Sage—and placed it on the table by the side of the other rough sketch.)

"You really do draw beautifully, Sieur," said Miss Retta, with a smile.

"Thank you," replied the Sieur, with a low bow.

"Why of course—that's the very identical place," said Old John, after examining the sketch carefully. "I guess arter 'all there may be quite a Channel running away in under 'yon mountains. Be yon the same Blue Mountains you 'were talking about just now?" added the old servant.

Then, whilst the Queen Elect and the others present examined the sketch, the Sieur proceeded:

"My Liege, Ladies and Gentlemen, in answer to Old John's last question: I am not sure whether I did right "in writing the words 'The Backbone Range' on the hills "shown in this last sketch or not—but I fancy I am right. "I have about come to the conclusion that these very hills "here—this very Range of Mountains in which this fair "estate of Summertrees is situated—are a part or a continuation, as it were, of our Blue Mountains, or as they are "called in our school maps—'the Backbone Range.' There "is another point I wish to mention: When I was at 'the "Corners' or 'the Sue'—whichever is the right term—yes- "terday I saw a lovely sheet of water which looked to me "almost exactly like the classic Cattawaul River shown on "this first sketch; if I could only have seen a picturesque "stone-hooker" a sailing by or a lying at some wharf I "would have said the resemblance was complete—in fact, "that it *must* be the classic Cattawaul."

"Papa, perhaps you might tell the Sieur, for his general "information, that the River at 'the Sue' is the same water "as in the Big Lake near here—or in other words, that the "water in the Big Lake discharges or empties itself into an "other Big Lake further down the shore by means of the "beautiful River he saw yesterday at 'the Sue.'"

"So I understood, my Liege from Mr. Williamson—and "he kindly pointed out to me the Big Rapids or Falls which "are in the same River and not far from 'the Corners'; in "fact, we heard the sound of the Rapids when we were driv-

"ing along the Road and before we reached 'the Sue,' and "we then asked about the matter."

"This is all certainly very interesting," said the Laird. "Kindly show me on your first sketch whereabouts—roughly speaking, of course—did you enter the Subterranean Channel."

"Well," said the Sieur, "here's the 'Northern Trail' running back from the Capital—roughly speaking—Sage 'Oscar's Cavern, that is, the Cavern in which he lives and 'his Cedar-Log Cottage are about here—and the Cavern in 'which we found the Subterranean Channel would be about 'here" (as he spoke the Sieur indicated with his pencil the approximate position of the places to which he referred).

"You see," he continued, "we did not start our journey at "the Outlet—we do not know where the Outlet is—nor are "we concerned in that question—not at present anyway; we "found the Subterranean Channel gently flowing through a "large Cavern or Cave—or rather at the end of it—Sage "Oscar made the discovery last fall;—it is a very interesting "subject, my Liege; I am sure you all will be glad to discuss "the whole matter with Sage Oscar when you see him. He "will tell you how he came to make the discovery—and in "fact all about it. Perhaps I should say—to make my story "more intelligible—that for some time past Sage Oscar has "been under the belief that there was a great country lying "to the Northward of our Land, if we only could find a way "to it. He had mentioned this belief to the King, and so "when it was decided that we should start to go without the "Land the King suggested we should travel to the abode of "the Hermit of the Mountains' and talk over the whole "matter with him. We did so, and here we are." Then the Sieur laughed gayly.

"Supposing the Hermit or the Sage (I suppose the gentleman is both—occupies both positions—as it were) could "not have shown you a way out of your Land to the North, "how would you have got out?" asked the Laird.

"We would perforce have had to follow the Classic Catta—"waul down south until we came to 'the furthest Ind' and to "the Great Sea" answered the Sessional Writer.

"How did you come?" asked the Queen-Elect; "that is,

"did you come in a sail boat or a row boat or how, may we ask?"

"Well, my Liege, we came in a Birch-bark Canoe which the Sage kindly lent us; we have carefully deposited it in the meantime under the shade of a large birch tree growing near the shore and not far from the Inlet of the Cavern."

"I know the tree very well," said Old John.

"Did you come in the dark," asked Miss Retta, looking at M. Machelle, "and weren't you afraid?"

"No—the Sage kindly lent us a lantern. We rigged up a kind of mast or spar near the bow of our craft and to this we fastened the light; so we fared very well—thanks to our kind friend," answered Machelle—addressing the winsome Retta.

"Did you come down stream or up stream?" asked Mr. Williamson.

"Up stream, my friend—but it was easy paddling; there is hardly any current—as far as we could see," answered the Sieur.

"Just one more question, Sieur D'Ulric," said the Laird; "how long did it take you to make the journey from the Cavern in the Mountain in your Land to the Inlet down on the Shore here?"

"Well—we left, I think, about eight o'clock in the morning—a day or two ago—we slept one night in the Cavern, en route—and reached Lake Superior the next afternoon in time for an early supper; so it would not take much of a mathematician to figure out the time we were actually paddling. M. Machelle could tell you about the number of hours we were 'off duty' so to speak—we were not used to paddling and we took matters easy. Speaking roughly, it is perhaps a paddle of say sixteen or seventeen hours—that is, steady paddling—no stops."

Then the winsome Retta said: "Can I ask a question about the first map? Whereabouts do you gentlemen live when you are at home—that is, when that dreadful Parliament is not sitting?"

The Sieur replied courteously and with a gay laugh: "In

"the first place, and as a member of the Noble and Hereditary House of Sieurs, which is one of the Houses which "go to make up that 'dreadful' Parliament to which you "have referred, Miss Retta, I must seriously object to that "word; it is not a 'dreadful' Parliament; on the other hand, "it is a real nice Parliament and both Houses now meet in "a really beautiful and stately Building which has only recently been erected."

Then M. Machelle said: "As a Sessional Writer in the aforesaid Noble and Hereditary House of Sieurs, I also "must object to the term; in fact, Mr. Speaker," (addressing the Laird) "the words are highly 'unparliamentary' and if "the Speaker were not a Lady she should be called to order "by you, Mr. Speaker."

Then everybody laughed, whilst Miss Retta said: "I am "still waiting to hear where you dreadful people live when "you are at home."

"Oh, that is a different matter altogether," said the Sieur. "You can call us 'dreadful' as much as you like—that is, "you can apply the term to us respectively and individually; "but it should not be applied to the distinguished Body of "which your fair Cousin is even now *de jure* if not *de facto* "the Head. Now when we are at home we live away up "in the Mountains—about here—roughly speaking—just "about due east from the rising City of Catburg. The "now-famous Kettlekettle Crick—as it is sometimes pro- "nounced—takes its rise either on my own Ranch or pretty "close to it—in some springy land—in fact, a Cedar Swamp "—just about here. M. Machelle lives on the next Ranch "—northerly from me. We have each six hundred and "forty acres of land. And a strange thing, sir (addressing "the Laird), it is—in fact, it is one of those peculiar coinci- "dences to which I believe you lately referred; the land "around here bears a great similarity to the land round our "way—doesn't it, Marchelle?—rough-looking land for the "most part—but with enough good arable land along with "the rough land—sufficient for all general farm purposes. "I suppose Machelle and I have twenty per cent—say a "fifth—good arable land, as fine land as can be 'found out

"of doors"—as the saying is—and the rest is rough wood-land—pretty stoney for the most part—some of it rocky—"but the rough land as a rule is admirably adapted for sheep raising, and on the small percentage of first-class land we can grow all the winter-fodder and general farm produce we wish—that's about right, isn't it, M. Machelle?"

"Yes," answered that gentleman, "the same thought occurred to me when walking around through here—and in fact, during our drive to 'the Sue' yesterday; the country seems just about the same as where we live when we are 'at home. I am glad to see and hear that this country is also admirably well watered; it is the same way with us—springs and spring-streams or 'cricks,' as they are often called, in abundance. We have everything to be thankful for in our part of the country, and I am sure you have 'here."

"That's so—you are right" said Mr. Williamson—and everyone murmured their assent.

"There is only one objection I see to this country," said Old John.

"What is that?" asked the Sieur. "Please don't say 'mosquitoes' and 'black flies'—because we have them too, and 'had enough, I tell you, for some six weeks in the year. 'And, Laird, as another of those peculiar 'coincidences,' kindly permit me to mention the tuneful 'Miss Kitty'—as 'sometimes they are called—and the playful 'black fly.' 'The members of those species which I have seen in this country—which I have had the pleasure of meeting—as it were—have a very strong resemblance—in fact, a strong 'family likeness'—as it were—to the members of the species we have with us at home."

"But I am interrupting you, Old John—pardon me," added the courteous Sieur.

"The 'objection' I had in my mind when I spoke awhile back," said Old John, "was not a 'Miss Kitty' nor a 'Black Fly'—tho' they are bad enough—it was a man—or rather, 'a miser—called 'Covet Grat.'"

And then everyone laughed and merrily and with light and glad hearts because all fear of the old money-lender

seemed to have been lifted from their hearts and their lives by the coming of the "Princes in Disguise"—as the Gude Wife still felt disposed to call them.

"Ah, yes—old Mr. Covet Grab," said the Sieur. "I have heard about him—in fact, I have a pretty good general idea of the man and his ways, although I've never met 'him. But we're all through with him. We're not going 'to take him back with us to the Land of the Grimalkins; 'that is, unless you folks are very anxious that we should 'take him with us."

Then everyone laughed merrily again—but there was a moisture in some of the merry eyes—for all that—caused by the thought of the great and imminent danger from which they had been delivered—and so happily and so suddenly.

"Now, my Liege, Ladies and Gentlemen, let us proceed, "if you kindly will, to business. 'Bizness afore Pleasure,' "you know—as the man said.

"Was that man named Covet Grab?" asked Old John. "It sounds very much like something he might have said."

Then whilst everybody laughed, the Sieur replied: "Perhaps it was—however, we will never mind just now who 'the man was. Old John, you're a practical man and a good 'hand for business—as the saying is. Is there a Stone 'Hooker round these parts hich we can charter 'for love or 'money—as the saying is?"

I never heard tell of any sich a thing," answered Old John. "A 'Stone Hooker'! What may be a 'Stone Hooker,' "please Sieur?"

"Don't you know, Laird?" asked the Sieur.

"No, I can't say that I do," that gentleman answered.

"Nor I," said Mr. Williamson in answer to the look of inquiry which the Sieur directed towards him.

"Well—that's strange," said the Sieur.

"Remarkable," said the Sessional Writer.

"Well, my Liege, Ladies and Gentlemen, the term 'Stone 'Hooker' is a term generally and freely applied to certain 'picturesque craft which trade up and down the classic Cat-tawaule River. They are 'general freighters,' so to speak—"probably in olden times they may only have been used in

"the carrying of *stone* for building purposes. But now-a-days they carry most everything in the way of freight and produce and general merchandise. In fact—I have seen 'then loaded with peat, with coal, with iron ore, even with such things as hay and oats and potatoes. In fact, now-a-days I fancy you can charter a 'Stone Hooker' to carry most anything in the way of freight. They are pictur-esque, romantic-looking craft—aren't they, old man?"

This latter inquiry was addressed to M. Machelle, who answered promptly, looking at Miss Retta, and, in fact, apparently giving his answer to her instead of to the Sieur.

"Certainly—I just dote on a 'stone hooker'—just love 'them—as the girls say."

"What girls?" asked Miss Retta.

Then of course they all laughed.

"This is really no laughing matter," said the Sieur—laughing, however, heartily himself.

"What I wanted to get at was this: As near as I can figure it out we will have on our return trip nearly enough freight to fill a 'Stone Hooker.' How many sheep have you here on the Ranch, Old John?"

"Only about thirty-two at present, Sieur; all thoroughbred Southdowns."

"And how many cows?"

"Just one—a milch cow—a thorough-bred Jersey, Sieur."

"Isn't that lovely!" said the Sieur. Then he continued:

"Any horses?"

"None at present, Sieur—we had a good team but—"

"Never mind, Old John, just now," said the Sieur, kindly. "I was only trying to arrive at our 'Manifest' or 'Bill of 'Lading.' Now, then, My Liege, Ladies and Gentlemen, I make the Bill of Lading as follows:

"Two horses (from the Williamson Farm, and respectfully named 'Moll' and 'Dobbin').

"Three Cow Bossies (one pure Jersey from the Summertrees Estate—two good milch cows—breed unknown to me "at present—from the Williamson Farm).

"Thirty-two sheep ('all thorough-bred Southdowns'—as "Old John says—from the Summertrees Estate).

"Sundry freight: such as provisions, hay and oats—farm implements—household furniture—

"That," said the Sieur, "about completes the 'Manifest' as far as the Freight is concerned. Then comes the Passengaire List:

"Four persons (two Ladies and two Gentlemen from Summertrees).

"Two persons (from the Williamson Farm).

"The Two Envoys or Ministers Plenipotentiary or Ambassadors Extraordinary.

"The Passengaire List then includes eight: all 'first Cabin' passengaires of course."

"Please, sir," said Old John, "who were the last two people you mentioned in the list of Passengaires? 'Pears to 'me we don't know 'em."

Then everybody laughed—and Mrs. Williamson explained to Old John in a loud undertone—kind of *sotto voce* like—"Thems the two Furriners, you know—themselves. Bein' as they're Furriners they've got to give themselves long names, you know."

"All right," said Old John. "I'm satisfied."

And then everybody laughed again and Old John joined in the laughter.

Then that gentleman, after thinking a minute or two, and after a-rubbing his head hard two or three times, said:

"I say, Sieur, there ain't any sich a thing round these 'ere parts as a Stone Hooker—maybe they have 'em more down 'the Lakes—round Trois River, Mout Royale an' sich parts—but it would not help us up here even if they had 'em down there—as far as I can see. But we have a couple of big 'wood-scows' down on the shore—maybe they would do if we rigged 'em up a wee bit."

"Well done, Old John!" said M. Machelle, getting up from his seat and taking the old man's hand.

"Why, of course they'll do! Just the thing!—capital! 'Hurrah!' said the Sieur.

Then he added:

"That was a 'happy thought,' as they say, Old John. How 'do you folks come to have these two wood scows?'"

Then the Laird said:

"Some years ago, when we were doing a lot of 'clearing' here at Summertrees, the thought came to us that perhaps if we saved some of our birch and maple, and if we cut it into four foot lengths for 'cord wood' we could make a sale of it down at 'the Sue'—'the Corners,' I mean, you know. It did seem too bad to be burning up on our 'log piles' such a lot of beautiful white maple—some of it even 'curley' or 'birdseye maple,' you know—and the birch is really fine 'red or black,' you know. So we talked the whole matter over with Mr. Jackson down at 'the Sue' and he thought perhaps he could make a sale for us to some of the Tugs which once in a while come up to 'the Sue.' And so Old John and I went to work and we got two or three neighbours to help us and we soon built two real nice 'wood scows.' We only used them a little while. We found it did not pay nearly as well as we expected. Mr. Jackson was not to blame. No one was. You see by the time we got the timber hauled to the shore in the winter time—during 'sleighing'—and then piled on the 'scows' when navigation opened and towed down to 'the Sue'—we found it did not pay. So we went on burning our timber again on our log piles—didn't we, Old John?"

"Yes," said the faithful old servant—"but the land got the good of the wood-ashes, anyway. It does a power o' good to the land."

"What did you mean by 'rigging them up,' Old John?" asked the Sieur; "in what way would you propose to rig them up?"

"Well, I meant p'rhaps we could put a good stout railing round the sides to keep the live stock from walking off into 'the water,'" replied Old John.

"Capital! Capital!" said M. Machelle.

"Yes, indeed!" said the Sieur. "That is another of Old John's 'Happy Thoughts.' If you put a railing round the 'wood scows' you will be going some way at all events towards changing them into 'Stone Hookers.' "

"When can we go and inspect these picturesque 'schoon-

"'ers'—as it were?" asked M. Machelle—looking at Miss Retta and seemingly addressing his query to her.

"Right away, I fancy," answered that lady—"that is, if everyone is as willing as I am."

"Well, come along then," said the genial Laird.

It was a pleasant and happy walk down to the shore where the weather-beaten old Craft lay. The gallant Sieur walked by the side of the faire Queen-Elect, and the equally gallant Sessional Writer escorted the winsome, darkeyed Retta. During the walk the young ladies had of course many questions to ask concerning the Land of the Grimalkins—its natural features—its people, etc. All of which were answered as fully as possible by the Envoys, Ministers Plenipotentiary and Ambassadors Extraordinary.

The "scows" were duly inspected and approved by the merry party. The Sieur said that if the scows were railed in as had been proposed they might perhaps even be "mistook-en" in the dark for a real "genuine" "Stone Hooker."

M. Machelle said they were "just the 'thing to a T,' as the 'saying is."

Then the Sieur said to Old John: "By what time will you "contract and agree to have these two scows railed in—and "watered"; I mean put in the blue waters of the 'Big-Sea- "Water'?"

"I cannot tell exactly, sir; Mr. Williamson and I will hurry up of course—and I presume the Laird and you two "Envoys"—as I think you called yourselves—will 'bear a "hand'—as the saying is. But I think I can promise you "that by this time to-morrow arter noon we will be ready "to start." Then Old John looked at the sun and said, "I'm "a taking it to be about five o'clock in the arter noon, sir. I "suppose you would not start until the next mornin'?"

"We will start as soon as ever you folks are ready," replied the Sieur. "We will of course take our commands "from Her Majesty—the Queen-Elect. We can start just as "well at midnight on the darkest night possible as at mid- "day—that is if we were once inside the Subterranean Chan- "nel. And that reminds me, Laird, it would be well to have "as much 'light on the subject'—as the saying is—as pos-

"sible. I mean as much light on the 'scows' of course. So "it would be as well for you folks to 'scare up'—as they say"—as many lanterns as you can and we can divide them up "between the two 'scows.' We can rig up little 'jury masts,' "as it were—spare masts—on which to put them. And "then we'll have lots of light and everything will be 'hunk' "dory"—as the saying is; won't it, Machelle?"

"Of course," that gentleman replied, looking at Miss Retta.

"You don't say so!" playfully said that lady.

"I think," continued the Sieur, "we will divide our Pas-sengaires between the two 'Hookers'—I mean 'wood 'scows.' M. Machelle will take command of one schooner "—and I can 'tread the quarter-deck' of the other—so to speak."

"That's capital," said the Laird.

"What are the names of the schooners?" asked M. Machelle—addressing Old John.

"They haven't got any names—sur. Leastwise not as I "ever heard tell of," replied Old John.

"Well, we will call one 'The Elfie' and the other 'The 'Retta,' if it's agreeable to the company," said the gallant Sessional Writer.

"It's a pity we haven't any Flags—but it can't be helped," said the Sieur.

Then as the party prepared to walk back again, M. Machelle said: "There's one little item of freight you forgot, 'Commodore.'"

"What is that, Capitaine?" asked the Sieur.

"A small 'jag'—so to speak—of Pansy Roots—from those "lovely flower-beds at the Williamson Farm. You need not "think, Mrs. Williamson, we would return without a good "supply of those Pansy Roots," said the gallant Sessional Writer.

"You can add them to the 'Manifest' or 'Bill of Lading,' "Capitaine," said the Sieur solemnly.

And then they all laughed—all but the Gude Wife—whose eyes moistened as she said feelingly: "Thank you, ever so

"much, gentlemen both. It would be real lonesome without those flowers."

"Oh, I'm so glad you thought of the Pansies," said the Queen-Elect—casting a grateful look on the Sessional Writer.

"You're real thoughtful—even if you are an Envoy and all those other dreadful things," said the mischievous Retta.

"Thankee, kindly, gentlemen," said Mr. Williamson—fur all your kindness."

"So says I," said Old John.

"And I, gentlemen," said the Laird.

Then the Sieur said solemn-like: "Please don't overwhelm us with your thanks—or we won't be in a fit condition to tread the quarter decks of the stately schooners, 'The Elfie' and 'The Retta,' to-morrow evening—eh, Capitaine Machelle?"

"Aye! Aye, sir," replied the Capitaine—"that's just how I feel."

Then Old John said: "It is bright moonlight these evenings. We can all work hard getting ready the necessary lumber which will be required—and getting things into as good a shape as possible. Mr. Williamson will kindly lend us Moll and Dobbin and they can haul the lumber to the shore."

"That's alright," said the Sieur—"have you lumber convenient?"

"Oh, we can easily get—between our place and Mr. Williamson's—the few boards and nails which will be necessary," answered Old John.

"I guess we can also have time to 'water' the scows—put them in the water," said the Laird.

"Why, it is real early yet," said M. Machelle, "and if it is a bright moonlight night—and Old John says it is going to be, I understand—we could not only 'water' the 'Hook-ers'—I mean the wood scows, but also do the necessary 'fitting-out' work—or some of it, anyway."

"Supposin' you folks all come and take supper at our place," suggested the Gude Wife—"it is nearer the shore

"than yourn, my dears" (this to "the Bonnie Leddies"); "then arter supper the work can be proceeding."

"Thank you," said the Laird, "we will accept your kind hospitality—if there won't be too many of us."

So the gay party proceeded to Mrs. Williamson's. The scows were lying on the shore a little further up past the place where the Envoys had left their Canoe on their arrival—and so on their way to the farm house the party soon came on the "cow path," which the Envoys had followed on the evening of their arrival.

"Why, here's our old friend, 'the Trail!'" exclaimed M. Machelle. "It seems to me like an old friend I had known for years—but we have not traveled it many times."

"Four times, that is all—as near as I can remember," said the Sieur. "It certainly does seem as if I had known it a long time—but after all it was only just about two days ago about this time—or even a little later. Let's see, it was after supper that evening."

"Why, come to think of it," said Machelle, "so it was—it was only the day before yesterday—in fact, two afternoons ago, that we arrived in this country—this great North Land; we went to 'the Sue' yesterday—and we reached here the afternoon before."

"That's so," said the Sieur, "it does seem longer than that, however. These are indeed eventful days in which we are living, old man, and we are crowding a great deal of important business into them."

"That's a fact," replied M. Machelle, who was walking along the trail by the side of the winsome Retta—"but they have been real happy days—even if they have been so eventful."

"Do you feel happy now, M. Machelle?" asked the Sieur pleasantly.

"Yes, real happy," replied the Sessional Writer; "never more so." Then addressing his faire or rather his brunette companion, he asked: "What again do you call this fair "Country? I either never have heard or else it has 'slipped "my memory"—as the saying it."

"New Ontario," replied his winsome companion with a gay laugh. "Do you think you can remember the words?"

"'New Ontario!' why that is a real pretty name—quite 'picturesque—isn't it, Sieur?"

"Quite romantic," answered that gentleman. "I don't remember hearing the words before. But we may have heard 'them yesterday. We heard a great deal about one thing 'and another yesterday."

"That's so," said M. Machelle.

By this time they had reached the hospitable Farm House.

After supper the "men folks" went to look up some boards—whilst the ladies finished their household duties.

In a couple of hours the waggon—loaded with boards—started on its journey to the beach—and the merry party walked along after it—all but Mr. Williamson, who sat up on the high seat to drive the team.

"I'm so glad you're taking 'Moll' and 'Dobbin,'" said Retta to M. Machelle as she walked demurely by his side.

"So am I," said that gentleman. "The fact is, I really have got to like Moll and Dobbin very much; in fact, I have 'got to like everything round these parts very much—all 'except Old Man Covet Grab—he is always excepted—I 'don't think I would like him particularly from what I've 'heard of him."

"And it was so kind of you, M. Machelle, to think about "those Pansy Beds," said the Gude Wife, who was walking near them and who had overheard what was said.

"Not a word more, please, ma'am, on that subject," said the Sieur, who also had overheard the conversation, "or I really will have to leave them out of the 'Manifest.' What "you should do, I fancy—we'll all help you if necessary of "course—is to get some wet moss—or dry moss—and moisten it—and put it in a box and then put your Pansy Roots "on top of the moss; or if we cannot get some moss—why "some leaves or earth would do. You know, ma'am," added the Sieur with a gay laugh, "we want to take these "pretty Pansies back to our own Country in as good a "condition as possible, so that when you set them out "again in the new beds we will help you to make in your

"new home in the Land of the Grimalkins—why you will
"hardly know you've changed your place of residence at
"all—will she, Machelle?"

"We'll make her feel as much at home—as possible,"
replied the Sessional Writer, with a laugh.

"Thank you, gentlemen, kindly," said the Gude Wife; "if
"I have my two cows—and my pansies—and if my Guude-
"man has Moll and Dobbin—why of course, we'll be right
"at home; that is, of course, if I can often see 'the Bonnie
"Leddies' and Old John and the kind Laird."

"Why, you'll all live very much the same as you do now,
"I fancy," said the Sieur—only there won't be any Mr.
"Covet Grab to fret about or to be afraid of."

For some hours the scene on the shore was a busy and
animated one. Everyone worked with a will; the Ladies
were not allowed to do any hard work—but they insisted on
doing all they could. And, as the Sieur gallantly said, their
very presence was a help—his exact words being: "You
"ladies by your very presence have made our labours easy
"and lightened our toil to such an extent that the whole
"business has been made fun—eh, Machelle?"

That gentleman replied, looking at the winsome Retta:
"I never had so much fun—real down-right fun—in my life
"as I am having these days; except, perhaps, that time on
"Bay street when we had the fun with the children; the time
"when His Majesty was 'Santa Claus's Partner,' you know."

"'Santa Claus's Partner!'" repeated the Queen-Elect.
"Please tell us at once all about it, M. Machelle. Of course
"we shall have to stop work in the meantime—but it is not
"every day we get the opportunity to hear a Fairy Tale—is
"it, Retta?"

"No" said that young lady demurely and looking at M.
Machelle.

"It is not a Fairy Tale, my Liege—Ladies and Gentle-
"men; it is an actual reality"—and then the story teller com-
menced to tell his story, but all the time looking at Miss
Retta and seeming to be telling the story to her more than
to any one else.

When the story was finished Miss Retta said: "What a dear old man His Majesty must be—I do long to see him."

"Old man?" replied M. Machelle. "You must not call 'the King old—he is not old."

"Is he married?" asked the Gude Wife.

"No," answered M. Machelle, "not when we saw him last—at all events."

"That's rather strange," said the Gude Wife, isn't it? Is "His Majesty good-looking?"

"He is a handsome man—and better than that he is one of the best men I ever knew—large-hearted, broad-minded—"eh, Machelle?"

"True, Sieur. And, you know, my Liege and Ladies and Gentlemen, there is a good old saying, 'handsome is that handsome does,'" replied M. Machelle.

"I wonder why he never married," resumed the Gude Wife reflectively.

"Madame," said the Sieur kind of solemnly, "as some one has said, 'There are chords in the human heart.'"^{*}

"Oh, my!" said the Gude Wife, sympathizingly, "how dreadful. How bad he must feel."

"Oh," said the Sieur, gayly, "even if his heart is affected he carries himself nobly and bravely and does not complain."

"I presume," said Retta, "you mean he has been 'crossed in love' at some time or other, just like one reads about in novels—isn't that romantic!"

"I did not say so," said the Sieur. "I simply remarked that some one had said, 'there are chords in the human heart.'"

"Heart disease is a very bad thing" said Old John. "I knew an old man once died from that complaint."

"You don't say so—how dreadful! How old was he?" asked Miss Retta.

"They said he was over ninety years—I am not sure how many years past ninety he was," replied the old servant.

^{*}The Translator rather thinks he has seen the words in double italics somewhere or other outside of this "Roman." Did not Charles Dickens put them—or some what similar words in the mouth of one of his characters?

"Oh, that's not so bad, you know, after all," said Mr. Williamson.

Then the Gude Wife said: "I wonder if the poor man—I mean His Majesty—likes flowers; I wonder if he would 'mind my giving him some of those Pansies you gentlemen 'thought so pretty."

"I think—in fact, I know—the King loves flowers," replied the Sieur, "and I am sure he will be glad to receive 'some Pansies from your fair hands, Mrs. Williamson. I believe His Majesty's favourite flower, however, is the 'Violet."

"I have some violet roots, I will bring with me too," said the Gudewife, "if you'll put 'em in your 'manifest,' as you 'called it. They're not blooming now—but some two or 'three weeks ago in the early spring they had some real 'lovely flowers. Didn't they 'Bonnie Leddies?'"

"Yes indeed," murmured the ladies addressed.

"I like that beautiful idea about the Children, Sieur 'D'Ulric," said the Queen-Elect thoughtfully. "If ever I 'do become a Queen—if this pretty Fairy Tale becomes 'true and a reality—I wish to do all I can for the Children 'of the Land of which I may be Queen."

"Thank you ever so much for so saying, my Liege, you 'have indeed made me happy," said the Sieur.

"And me," added M. Machelle. "I also am one of the 'Children's Playmates."

"There is another gentleman who loves 'the Children' 'very much and whom soon you'll meet, I hope, my Liege," said the Sieur. "I refer to Sage Oscar. M. Machelle and 'I had a talk with him on the subject. We happened to 'mention the fun we had had on Bay street with 'Santa 'Claus's Partner,' and he is entirely of the same mind on 'the subject as His Majesty and M. Machelle and myself.' And then the Sieur and M. Machelle, between them, related to the Fairie Queen-Elect the talk they had had with the Sage with reference to his taking some Children as Guests for the pretty little Cedar-Log 'Cottage during the summer time—and their taking some Children as Guests on their own Ranches as soon as they could arrange the matter.

The Queen-Elect and Miss Retta and the Gude Wife—in fact, everyone—listened intently to the narration.

Then the Gude Wife said: "Oh, I'm so glad you gentle-men are so kind-hearted. Our lives will be so happy."

"And so useful," added Miss Retta.

Then Old John spoke up and said: "I'm not much of a hand to talk and I can't express myself like what some folkses can; but if there is anything Old John can do in the way of making 'the Children' happy, you can count on him. I may be said to have helped to 'bring up' these two purty gals—my 'Bonnie Leddies.'"

"And you can count on me also, my Liege—as I s'pose 'I must call you now—and Ladies and Gentlemen,'" said Mr. Williamson.

"And I'm generally to be found pretty easily," said the Laird, with a gay laugh.

Then Miss Retta said demurely, looking at M. Machelle: "If the Queen-Elect wishes 'this pretty Fairy Tale'—as she called it—to 'become true and a reality'—as she put it—I think she should command all her Liege subjects to get to "work and not to 'gossip' any more. Why, we've been talking here 'like a lot of old women'—as the saying is—"for—ever so long."

Then everyone laughed and went to work again.

By eleven o'clock that night there floated in the little Bay where the old Wood-Scows had been resting peacefully for some years, two strange-looking craft—each with a rakish fo'mast and main mast, and each neatly railed-in. The craft were not "riding at anchor," but each vessel was securely fastened by a long rope to a tree on the shore.

"Don't they look real pretty?" said the Gude Wife.

"I just love sailing—I'm so glad we are going for a boat-ride in them," said the vivacious Retta—looking at M. Machelle.

"So am I," said that gentleman.

There was not a breath of wind and the Craft lazily swung at their moorings with the scarce perceptible motion of the water.

"Well, we'll go home now and get a good sleep and start

"to work as early as we can in the morning getting the freight on board, Commodore," said the Laird.

"Aye! Aye! Sir!" replied the Sieur.

The Commodore and the Master of "the Retta" had, of course to accompany the Royal party back to Suummer-trees—and bid them farewell at the gate—so the Gude Wife said that she and her Goodman would also go along—that it was not a great deal out of their way.

At the gate the merry party separated—the two Captaines accompanying the Gudeman and his wife home and sleeping in the same room which they had occupied the night before.

As the Sieur sunk to rest he heard M. Machelle say sleepily, "I never did think so much important business could possibly be crowded into two short days."

"Nor I," answered the Sieur, half-asleep.

"Good night, Commodore, and 'Vive La Reine,'" said Machelle.

"Good night, Capitaine, and 'Vive La Reine' it is," replied the Sieur.

All the members of the gay party were up betimes in the morning and soon were hard at work.

It was decided the live stock should not be put on board until the last thing—and the forenoon was devoted to the moving of the freight. Moll and Dobbin were kept busy all day hauling heavy loads between the Williamson Farm and the Shore and between Summertrees and the Shore.

The water was conveniently deep at that point, so the scows could be brought right up close to the Shore and the team used to draw the waggon right on to the scows and it would be unloaded there; that was at first and until so much freight was piled on the scows that driving on to them became impossible—and then the waggon was unloaded from the Shore.

As there was no wind out on the Lake and it was certain there would be none in the Subterranean Channel, the Commodore said he would allow the "stevedores" to pile as much freight on the decks as they wished—provided they secured it so that it would not fall down and hurt anyone—or fall into the water—and provided sufficient room was

left for the accommodation of the live stock, which had to go on board that afternoon—and provided sufficient accommodation was left for the Passengers. And you never in all your life saw so much freight piled on two wood-scow-barges as was piled that day on "the Elfie" and "the Retta."

By three o'clock everything was on board but the live stock, and Old John was preparing to drive down to the Shore from Summertrees the sheep and the Jersey Cow and the Gudeman was preparing to drive down to the Shore from the Williamson farm the two "cow-bossies" and Moll and Dobbin were in fact already on board "the Elfie."

"Don't hurry the sheep or the cattle, boys" the Commodore had said. "There is lots of time—even if we are a little late in starting there will be no 'demurrage' to pay."

Then the Sieur and the Sessional Writer took a little walk to the house of the neighbour—the next house on "the Sue" "Road" from Summertrees. They carried with them the "Pedlar's Pack" they had borrowed from Mr. Jackson at "the Corners," and giving the Pack to the kind neighbours they asked them "would you mind—next time your waggon "is going to 'the Sue'—handing this valise to Mr. Jackson—"the General Merchant? He kindly lent it to us two or three "days ago." And on being told by the kind people that they would be glad to return the valise the very next Saturday, as they were going in themselves on that day, the Envoy said, "Thanks—ever so much"—and returned to Summertrees.

When Old Man Jackson opened the valise on Saturday afternoon he found inside a small piece of paper, bearing these strange words:

"Thanks ever so much
"for the use of this
"Pedlar's Pack."

(Signed) (Signed)

"D'Ulric Sieur, Machelle,

"Minister's Plenipotentiary and Am-
"bassadors Extraordinary from The
"Land of the Grimalkins."

Old Brer Jackson was alone in the sto' at the time the valise was returned. His faire wife was busy in the house behind the sto' baking a pie for dinner—a deep-apple-pie—one of those pies Old Brer Jackson particularly liked.

So he went back into the house and said, "Susan! Susan! "Mary, my Dear! Just see the funny words them two Furriners have writ in the walise we lent 'em t'other day!"

The fair Mrs. Jackson had her fair arms in the baking tin up to her elbows—and the dimples in her fair arms looked prettily through the flour—and in fact altogether she made a charming picture; as people used to say, "Sis Jackson always "does look well."

After her husband had read the paper to her slowly three times the lady remarked oracularly: "Wa'al, that ere paper "shows three things any way:

"First: that them gentlemen were *Furriners*; it says 'from "the land of the Grimalkins.'

"Second: it shows that them gentlemen were *distinguished Furriners*—having all them 'ere titles and names which you read over.

"In fact, they're probably some kind of noblemen.

"Thirdly: it shows they were *thankful—grateful*; it says "thanks ever so much."

Then Brer Jackson thanked her for the interpretation—kissed her—and returned to the sto'; and she returned to the making of that deep-apple-pie.

It is needless to say that for many years that mysterious note was safely preserved as a precious relic and keepsake among the Archives of the Jackson Family at "The Sue."

To get back to the Envoys; when they reached the Summertrees gate on their return from the kind neighbours, at whose house they had left the "Pedlar's Pack" they found the two "Bonnie Leddies" just coming out accompanied by the Laird. They all looked as if they had been crying a little, so neither of the Envoys said anything to them for a few minutes—for fear of making them feel even more sad. The Sieur and Machelle of course easily understood the natural grief there would be on the part of the members of the Summertrees family in saying good-bye for ever to the

old Homestead, where they had lived so long—the only Home they had ever known.

The two girls walked one on each side of the Laird and holding his arm—and the two Envoys at first walked silently behind. Then in a few minutes the Queen-Elect said: "Why should we mind leaving the old Homestead, Papa, "when we are leaving it under such happy circumstances? "If these 'Princes in Disguise'—as Mrs. Williamson calls "them—had not come we would have had to leave in any "event. We should be so happy—and not down-hearted."

"That's so," said Miss Retta; "the idea of any girl fretting "when she is on her way to a Throne and a Crown and a "conspicuous place on Postage Stamps and on—?"

"On Yens, Miss Retta," replied M. Machelle, stepping up to her side and walking beside her.

Then of course the gallant Sieur stepped up by the side of the faire Queen-Elect—who said, with a gay laugh:

"And the idea of a girl fretting when she is on her way "to be a Lady's Maid to a Queen and a Lady-in-Waiting to "a Queen! Why, the very ideal!"

And by the time they reached the shore the whole party were "the gayest of the gay," as the saying is.

They found every one on board—and the live stock was also safely stowed away. In fact everything was in readiness for the start.

The Commodore looked at his watch and said: "It is now "a quarter to five as I make it. If you will excuse us the "Capitaine and I will step down the shore and bring up our "Canoe—or rather sage Oscar's Canoe; we'll have it here in "ten minutes. And at five precisely we can be ready to "weigh anchor and depart."

At this juncture a very pretty little incident occurred and one well worth narrating in this Romance.

The Queen-Elect and Miss Retta had each been carrying in their arms on their way down from Summertrees a little parcel. They would not let anyone else carry them and said they were very light.

Well, at this juncture the Queen-Elect said:

"If you will allow me, Commodore, I wish in the name of

"all present to make a little gift—a little present—to your good ship 'The Elfie'—your Flagship—the Flagship of the 'Flotilla—as it were."

And the faire girl-Queen undid the parcel she held in her hand and it was seen to contain a pretty Flag of white cotton, which, as it was unfolded, was seen to bear the words prettily worked in blue and crimson wool—"The Elfie."

And then Miss Retta—addressing the Capitaine of "The Retta," said demurely:

"Capitaine—your ship may not be 'the Flagship of the 'Flotilla,' but it is a noble ship 'for a' that—an' a' that'*—as the Song goes—and you may well be proud to tread its 'Quarter Deck—if it has one. Kindly place at its masthead "this Flag—and proudly may it flutter in the Breeze."

And here the winsome girl undid her parcel, which was found to contain an equally-pretty Flag bearing on a white ground in letters of blue and crimson the words—"The Retta."

Everyone of course cheered the faire speakers—or rather, the faire speaker and the brunette speaker.

The Commodore and Capitaine of course made suitable replies and were naturally very proud of their ships' Flags.

"I presume you 'Bonnie Leddies'—as Old John calls you—"sat up pretty late last night or rather early this morning "making these pretty Flags," said M. Machelle.

"I guess so," said the Sieur.

The Flags were then hoisted on their respective ships, accompanied by merry cheers. Then the gallant Commodore added: "Now, the Capitaine of 'The Retta' and myself will "go and get our Birch Bark Canoe, or rather Sage Oscar's—"and whilst we are gone—we'll be back I expect inside of "ten minutes or so—I will ask Old John and Mr. Williamson "—who are First Mates of 'The Elfie' and 'The Retta,' respectively—to light the Lanterns."

"Why it is only about five o'clock and it won't be dark for "hours," said the Queen-Elect—"in fact if it is a bright "moonlight night like last night was it won't be dark all "night—except for perhaps an hour or two before dawn."

*Robert Burns.

"You're forgetting the Tunnell, my Liege!" said Retta with a laugh..

"Why, of course I was," said Elfie.

"You see, my Liege," the Commodore added, "we will be at the mouth of the Subterranean Channel within ten minutes after we leave here, and so we had better have our lanterns lit before we start—probably."

"Aye—Aye—sir," said the two Mates, as they proceeded to take the Lanterns down and light them, to the great admiration of "the Bonnie Leddies."

There were two Lanterns to each schooner, one on the Fo' Mast and the other on the Main Mast.

Inside of ten minutes the Commodore and the Capitaine had returned with the Sage's pretty little Canoe.

The sailing arrangements had been made as follows: The Canoe was to go ahead—leading the "procession"—a rope was to be attached to the Canoe—the other end to be fastened round the fo-mast of the "Flagship"—another rope was to connect that ship with "The Retta."

The Laird—who had had a good deal of practice in paddling—was to take charge of the Canoe. Once in the Subterranean Channel they would have a gentle current with them—all the people on the Barges would have to do would be to steer their respective crafts. Until they reached the Inlet the Barges were to be poled along—they were to be kept inshore where the water was not too deep for poling. Once inside the Subterranean Channel the poles would be laid to one side and long handled oars were to be used for steering. The Capitaine of each craft was to stand at its bow and the first mate at its stern. The Ladies were all to travel on the Royal Vessel—the Flagship—and of course their faithful attendant, Old John, was to be first mate on that craft. M. Machelle and Mr. Williamson were respectively the first and second officers of "The Retta."

So the Gentle Reader can see that all needed arrangements had been made.

Before I forget it, perhaps I should state that when the Envoys were in the Summertrees Homestead they had noticed a pretty little Cottage Piano—in fact the "Bonnie Led-

"dies" had played for them on this instrument and had sung for them to its accompaniment some lovely old-fashioned Ballads. It was indeed a sweet-toned instrument and of course the "Bonnie Leddies" valued it highly and would have been sorry to have left it behind. The Envoys would have insisted on putting it in "the Manifest" even if it had been a heavy affair—but fortunately it was a light piece of furniture—and it did not take up much room. So in spite of the remonstrance of the "Bonnie Leddies," who said it was a pity to put their friends to so much trouble, the Cottage Piano was added to the Bill of Lading of the good ship "The Elfie," bound from "the Port of Summertrees Landing in the Land of New Ontario to the Sage's Landing in "the Land of the Grimalkins." That was the way the genial Commodore said he would perhaps have to describe the matter in the "Clearance Papers."

So now, at ten minutes past five of the clock, in the afternoon, on the third day after the Joint Envoys had landed in "the Wilds of New Ontario," the gallant Commodore stepped on to the Quarter Deck of The Flagship of the Flotilla, which had thus rapidly and expeditiously been got "into "commission"—as the saying is—and gave the command, "Now, Land, if you please, by the right! Quick, March! "I mean, Slow Paddle!"—and the eventful Journey to the Throne began.

The Lantern of course which had done such good service on the upward journey was again suspended to the little fo'mast in the Canoe and was shining brightly as of yore—having been carefully cleaned and replenished with oil.

Inside of ten minutes the heavily-laden Barges had been carefully poled along the shore to the Inlet of the Subterranean Channel. Fortunately there was "not a breath of "wind"—as the saying is—out on "The Big-Sea-Water,"* or the adventurous sailors might not have had such an easy time in the navigation of their heavily-laden and unwieldly craft. As the Laird said afterwards: "It is really an unusual thing to see Lake Superior so calm for such a length

*"Gitche—The Big-Sea-Water;" The Song of Hiawatha: H. W. Longfellow.

"of time. It was like 'a sea of glass'—all the time we were
"‘watering’ the craft and fitting them up—and it continued
"that way until we were safe in the Inlet. I don’t know
"what we would have done if there had been any 'sea on'—
"as the saying is; our cargo might have 'shifted'—and we
"might have lost some of it—or been knocked about on the
"rocks and had a bad time generally. A wood-scow-barge
"without a rudder is a bad thing I would think on Lake Su-
"perior if there is any 'sea on.' "

And the Laird should have known, as he had done quite a lot of boating on the Lake in his life time.

Owing to the calmness of the water on the Big Lake there was no trouble at all in making the Inlet—and almost noiselessly the Flotilla glided into the mouth of the Inlet and the Subterranean Voyage began.

"Oh, my! Isn’t it just perfectly delightful!" whispered Retta to the Queen-Elect and to the Gude Wife, who stood with her near the Quarter Deck where the Commodore was just then busy paddling on the port side with his long-handled oar—in order to get the unwieldy craft into a little better position. Once the two big crafts were got into proper shape in the channel there was little required in the way of steering—the current was very slow and easy—and the course of the River or Channel seemed nearly straight.

"I’m glad there are no 'crooks' or bends in this 'Crick,'" remarked the Commodore to his First Mate—"if there had been you and I would have had to 'work our passage'—as the saying is. But everything is just lovely."

Then the gallant Commodore turned to his faire Passengaires and said:

"How are you enjoying your journey, my Liege and Ladies?"

"I think it is just delightful—but Oh, my, what is that—'oh, what is it?" and here the faire Queen-Elect actually clung to the Commodore for his protection—and so did the other two Ladies.

What was the matter was simply this: The beautiful Jersey cow, which was also a Passengaire—"second-class"—on the good ship "Elfie," apparently felt that it was time

she expressed audibly her appreciation of the kindness of the officers of the good ship in looking so carefully after her comfort. The fact was particular attention had been paid to the matter of the accommodation provided for the live stock during their journey. Straw had been supplied in abundance for bedding—and there was an abundant supply of newly cut grass and clover, and also some of last season's hay in the way of fodder. Then also it may have been that this identical Jersey cow was of a Poetic and romantic temperament; perhaps she was very much impressed with the picturesque and weird appearance of the Subterranean Channel and wished audibly to express her ideas on the subject. Anyway, the Jersey lady threw up her head in the air and called out:

"Mooh!—Mooh! Mooh!"

And of course the Echoes in the vast Subterranean Channel took up the unwonted cry and kept repeating it for ever so long—"Mooh! Mooh! Mooh!" kept coming back apparently from all points of the compass. You never in your life saw such a surprised lot of cows as were that Jersey cow—a second-class Passengaire on "The Elfie" and the two Williamson-milch-cows, also second-class Passengaires on the same good ship. They stared all around them in great wonder and amazement—then they would gaze up in wonderment at the roof of the Cavern. It of course seemed to them that they were surrounded by cows—cows here—cows there—cows even away up in the roof—cows everywhere.

As soon as the gallant Commodore had explained the matter to the fair people clinging so tightly to him they apologized and commenced to laugh heartily. The Sieur joined in the laughter and so did the Laird, and Old John and Mr. Williamson. Old John, standing in his place in the stern, had at first been rather alarmed, but directly he heard the merry laughter of the folks in the bow he had been assured—and then he commenced to understand the matter and so he joined heartily in the laughter. As for Mr. Williamson, he of course at first was rather "taken aback"—as he afterwards said—by the unwonted sound, but as he heard his own Capitaine laughing he knew everything was alright.

The Laird was surprised at first, but he soon knew what the cause was—and of course he heartily joined in the laughter.

And of course this hearty laughter was just what the playful Echoes wanted. They played with the "Ha! Ha! Ha!" for ever so long. Miss Retta afterwards said to M. Machelle that she never heard so much laughing in her life.

As for the cows, they never "Mooed" again during the time they were in that Subterranean Channel. And as for the sheep: one ewe—probably very much impressed by the weird and picturesque scenery, ventured to express her opinion in a rather sonorous "Baa! Baa! Baa!"—but the sound seemed to wake up so many unseen sheep all over the place—that the ewe who made the remark aforesaid and the other sheep traveling with her, became really bewildered, and it perhaps took them the remaining hours of the journey to arrive at a proper solution of the matter. Perhaps it was because they were busy trying to figure the matter out that they were so quiet; there was no more "baa-ing" during the voyage.

At about ten o'clock that night the gallant Commodore called to the Laird to stop at the first convenient Landing Place and they would halt for the night. In a few minutes the canoe stopped at a very suitable place for the purpose; a spot where there was a long stretch of level rock—most of it covered with a thick, soft pretty moss. "Why, this was "one of our camping places," the Commodore called out to the Master of "The Retta."

"Aye, Aye, sir; so it is," that gentleman answered.

The Passengers and Officers—"all hands and the Cook"—as the saying is—enjoyed a hearty supper in picnic fashion on the level rock. The gentlemen bringing out quilts and blankets on which the ladies could recline—in case the moss should be damp. Then the ladies made comfortable beds for themselves on the flat, moss-covered rock—and the gentlemen spread their blankets in a cosy corner of the good ship "Elfie" and soon were also fast asleep.

The two schooners had been carefully and strongly fastened to the shore—ropes being securely attached to some

big rocks which jutted out conveniently for the purpose. The Sage's canoe had of course been carefully deposited on the flat rock.

By eight o'clock the next morning the Flotilla was under way or under *weigh*—whichever it is—again.

And during that morning the gay party amused themselves by singing old-Ballads to the accompaniment of the Cottage Piano—played by the "Bonnie Leddies."

As the Commodore said, "that Piano has already more than paid its freight-bill in the enjoyment it has given us."

About noon a couple of hours' halt was made for Luncheon—and then again the Flotilla proceeded.

But now everything was quiet on the vessels—and the passengaires and officers spoke in a low tone.

Every one seemed to be expectant and watchful.

The fact was that the Flotilla must now be rapidly nearing "the Sage's Landing Place"—as the officers called it—and great care must be taken not to miss it. The only way by which it could be located was by noticing the cross-cavern which intersected at that point the vast cavern through which the Flotilla had now been sailing for so many hours. The officers described to the Laird and to the Passengaires the description of the place as nearly as they could and everyone was keeping a sharp lookout, on the port side. It needed a sharp lookout, because the lanterns did not throw their light very far. It was a very important matter indeed. It would never do to pass the place.

"I wish we had thought to have erected a big beacon—"mark or mound of stones or something by which we could "have told the place more easily," said the Commodore to the Capitaine of "The Retta" during their halt for Luncheon.

"Perhaps it would have been better," that gentleman replied, "but I feel sure we won't miss it. I remember the "look of the place pretty well. We'll all keep a sharp look—"out on the Port side, but I rather think we won't make the "place until about four or five this afternoon."

It had now got to be about half-past three and no sign yet of the Cross-Cavern. Everyone was "on the tip toe of "expectation," as the saying it; when all of a sudden Miss

Retta said: "Listen! Don't you hear that? Why, it's some little children singing—isn't it?"

Everyone listened eagerly. In a second or two the Laird called out from the Canoe—he also had heard the sound: "There's some little children singing away down the stream."

The sound was as yet too faint for the words of the Song to be distinguished, but as there seemed no doubt that there were children singing away down the stream the Commodore gave the command: "Boys! Cheer!"

For some minutes the Echoes which repeated the cheer all around them prevented the people on the Flotilla from hearing the reply which came from the folks away down the stream, but in a few minutes there was no doubt but that some people down the shore had heard their cheer and were replying to it. "Boys! Cheer again!" said the gallant Commodore—and again the Echoes resounded throughout that vast Subterranean Channel. This time the reply from the folks away down the shore was even now more distinct.

"I presume there is no doubt but they will be able to make out our lights a long way off, as we have five of them, and they must make a pretty sight. And there does not seem to be any bend or curve in the River for miles," called out the Master of "The Retta" to the Commodore.

"Our lights looked real pretty from the shore, anyway," replied the Commodore. "I noticed myself how pretty they looked."

Then in two or three minutes the Laird called out: "I think I can make out a Light away down on the Port side, sir."

"I guess you're right, Laird, but I'm not quite sure yet," replied the Commodore.

Then he called out to the Master of "The Retta:"

"Retta, ahoy! Can you make out anything down stream, sir—away down—on the Port side?"

"I think there's a light there, sir," answered the gallant Capitaine of "The Retta."

Then the faire Queen-Elect said: "They're singing again—and, oh, how sweetly those children are singing; there's a Lady singing with them, too, I fancy. And now and then

"there's a deeper voice one can hear—a man's voice. I wonder who they are."

Then the gallant Commodore called out again: " 'Retta,' 'ahoy! Who's singing down the shore, sir?'"

The gallant Capitaine listened intently for two or three minutes and then answered: " 'Elfie,' ahoy! I guess the 'Sage has already got his little Children Guests, sir.'"

"But don't you hear a Lady's voice, sir?" pursued the Commodore. "Who is the Lady, think you, Capitaine?"

The gallant Master of "The Retta" listened intently a little while and then said: "Commodore, I guess the Queen—" "I mean the Sage's own particular Queen—of course—must—" as you remember I suggested might one day happen—"have come a-tripping up the mountain-side and a-saying, "where is that pretty little cedar-log cottage which I have "seen in my dreams?" "

"I guess you're right, sir," called back the gallant Commodore.

"How romantic—we're getting to be sure, Captain M—" chelle!" said the winsome Retta strolling aft and addressing the gallant Master of "The Retta"—who stood at the bow of that vessel.

"Won't you please stay and talk to me a little while, young "Lady?" said the gallant Mariner—in reply—"tis awful "lonesome here all alone and no one to talk to. Mr. William—"son is on board of course, but he is away at the stern and "I'm real lonesome here at the bow. It is hardly fair—when "one comes to think about the matter seriously, you know—"for the gallant Commodore—even if he is a Commodore—"to have no less than three of the fair sex to comfort him "and poor me have none. And then again, I am taking the "trouble to sail your own ship, you know—and—"

"My 'own ship'?" replied the winsome Lassie.

"Why, yes—is not this gallant craft, yclept 'The Retta'—" "and a real 'saucy craft' she is, too—as the saying is."

"Well, I never!" said the winsome Retta. "I really would "stay and talk with you a little while even if I am 'saucy'—" "but the Queen is calling me—don't you hear her?"

There was no doubt about the matter. "Retta! Retta! Please come here! Why, where has the child gone?"

"The child is here, my Liege," said Retta. "What can I do for your Majesty? You know I suppose that I am no longer your Playmate but your Lady's Maid and Maid-in-Waiting."

"Don't be a goose, Retta!" said the Queen-Elect. "I called you so that you could listen to the beautiful Song 'those Children are singing and tell me what air it is."

Retta listened for a little while and then said: "Oh, there's no doubt I think about the air, my Liege; your Majesty knows it well and has often played it and also sung the words."

"I thought the Air was very familiar, but I could not recall the name. What is it, dear?"

"'My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean,' my Liege," answered Retta.

"But those don't seem to be the words," said the Queen-Elect. "Now, listen intently for a few minutes and you will hear something a little different. Ah, now they are either singing louder or else we are getting a good deal closer to them than when they sang the same piece a few minutes ago. They seem to be starting it over again. How nicely that Lady's voice chimes in with the sweet little childish voices—and I suppose the gentleman who is singing is the Sage; 'Sage Oscar.' Now they seem to be starting again from the first, and we seem to be getting so close that we can make out the words now pretty plainly!"

"Why, yes, my Liege," said Retta, "tis strange—the Air certainly is 'My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean,' but the words seem to be:

" 'My Pussy has gone from her basket,
" 'My Pussy has gone up a tree.
" 'Oh, who will go up 'mid the branches,
" 'And bring back my Pussy to me?

Chorus—

" 'Bring back! Bring back!
" 'Oh, bring back my Pussy to me;
" 'Bring back! Bring back!
" 'Oh, bring back my Pussy to me.

“The dog that lives down by the meadow,
“The dog with the very loud bark,
“Has frightened away my Pussy,
“And made her run into the Park.

Chorus—

“Bring back, etc.

“They say that when some folks are frightened,
“Their hair'll turn perfectly white,
“And if Pussy stays up there all morning,
“She won't have a black hair by night.

Chorus—

“Bring back, etc.”

“Isn't that just lovely, my Liege?”

“It is, indeed, Retta. But see, we are getting pretty close to 'the Sage's Landing,' as the gentlemen called it. We can see the light so plain now and I fancy I can even make out some of the forms of the people standing there. I even fancied just now that I saw some children in white dresses.”

“Why, I am almost sure I can, my Liege.”

Just then the gallant Commodore came up to the two “Bonnie Leddies,” and taking off his cap and bowing low, he said, in a voice which plainly showed his emotion:

“My Liege, we are now nearly Home. Not only Home for us Envoys, but Home for all of us. Not far before us is 'the Sage's Landing,' as we have called it. You will stand on the shores of your own Kingdom—your new Kingdom—the fair Land of the Grimalkins. My fellow Envoy and myself have enjoyed our journey, but right glad are we to be nearly home again and especially are we glad when we think of the success which has attended our humble efforts—and that we are bringing to this fair Land such a Faire Queen. Madame, My Liege, down at the Landing stand to meet us and to welcome us—to meet you and to give you a Royal welcome—some dear little children and our good friend Oscar the Sage—and apparently there is also some Lady there—probably his own particular Queen—let us hope so. My Liege, I have made a longer speech than I intended. But I desire to welcome you—oh, so heartily

"and thankfully—to the Fair Land of the Grimalkins and
"to the hearts and homes of its People—"

The Sieur could not proceed further.

In reply, the faire Queen-Elect—with a sweet smile—and with signs of tears—but happily of joy not of sorrow—in her eyes—went to the little Cottage Piano, and, opening it, began to play the opening bars of that dear and old—and old-fashioned—and yet always new—Ballad, "Home, Sweet "Home"—and Retta began to sing and the words were taken up by every one in the Flotilla, as well as the merry group on the shore, and the Echoes took them up and they resounded far and wide and high and low all over that vast Subterranean Channel, and as she stopped playing and turned from the Piano to look at the merry group on the shore—not so very far down on the Port side now—the faire Queen-Elect caught the eye of the Sieur D'Ulric as he looked towards her—and she murmured softly:

"And it's a happy home-coming indeed for us all, Com—"modore."

And thus it was that—according to Ancient Legends—in ye far off dayes—in ye Olden dayes—in ye distant dayes—came the good Queen Elfie from the far off North Land to her Throne in the Land of the Grimalkins.

And this is why, the Heralds tell us, the figure of a Wood Scow Barge appears in the left hand corner of the Royal Arms, in the Land of the Grimalkins.

And thus it was, the old men tell us, the Ancient sculpture came to be made in bas-relief, years and years ago, and which yet may be seen, although crumbling with age, in the porch or entrance to the Sieurs' House in the Parliament Buildings at Mieauburg; the sculpture showing two Wood Scow Barges preceded by a Birch Bark Canoe and a-coming through a dark Subterranean Channel and underneath the sculptured figures one can still faintly make out the words:

"Elle vient—Vive La Reine."

THE TRANSLATOR'S EPILOGUE

The Gentle Reader cannot help but have observed that there are certain things corrected with the foregoing "Roman" and incidents contained therein which go to prove almost indisputably, as it were, the Wonderful Story related by "Tim the Traveler," and a translation of which appears in Volume 3 of these "Foolish Tales."

There are little incidents and circumstances mentioned in M. Ringtaff's "Roman" which would probably be looked upon by Foxes or Lawyers as pieces of—"Real" or "Intrinsic Evidence"—and all going to prove most indisputably—so to speak—the veracity of Tim's narration.

For instance, it is likely that Le Sieur D'Ulric and his friend Machelle when they came out of the Subterranean Channel deposited their birch-bark canoe in the very same place as that in which, years and years afterwards in the reign of Queen Mayrilla, Captain Conrad stowed away his frail bark to await his return. In fact, the gallant Captain probably put his canoe under the very same tree or at any rate a successor or descendant of the very same tree as that under which the gallant D'Ulric and his friend Machelle stowed away their canoe so many years before.

There is another matter The Translator would like to mention: it will be noticed that the narrative hereinbefore contained and so carefully, faithfully and accurately translated from the Classic Sanscrit into "Queen's English" and United States, does not give any particulars concerning the visit which Sage Oscar intended to make to His Majesty, King Grimalkin the First, during the absence of the intrepid voyageurs in their lantern-light journey up the Subterranean River to Lake Superior.

Nor does the narrative say anything concerning the journey of the little children-guests from the Capital City to the Mountain-home of the Sage. Nor does the narrative throw any light upon that most romantic episode—the coming of the Queen, that is, the Sage's own particular Queen—to her cedar-log Cottage. The Gentle Reader is, of course, delighted to find that M. Machelle's words have come true—that his hope has been realized:

"Aye," said Machelle, "and let us hope that soon that Queen I spoke of will come a-tripping up the mountain side—and a-saying 'where is that pretty cedar-log Cottage I have seen in my dreams?" (Act III, page 99.) But naturally one would like more particulars concerning the chantic episode.

The Translator does not wish to find fault with the venerable Classic which he has been translating, but it does seem a great pity and a matter to be sincerely regretted that the "Roman" ends—in fact, "stops short," as the saying is—at such a very interesting point in the Narrative.

There are so many things concerning which the Reader would like further and fuller particulars; e. g.,

(a) What about "the Bonnie Leddies"—the Faire Elfie and the Bruyante Retta? One would think from the narrative that the gallant Sieur was in a good way to win the hand of the Queen-girl, and that his friend Machelle was in a good way to win the hand of her friend and Lady-in-Waiting Retta. How did those little "Love affairs" come out?

(b) The Translator respectfully submits that it was almost unpardonable on the part of the Author of "Le Roman" to leave out entirely the conclusion of that little Romance concerning "La Belle Modiste Aux Dollies"—"Ma Violette"—"Sweet Violet."

We want to know; did she or did she not marry King Grimalkin the First after he resigned his Throne and his Crown and his place on the Yens and the Postage Stamps of his Country and became a simple sheep rancher on the Blue Mountains—if so—full particulars; if not—why not?

(c) What about Old Man Covet Grab—the villain in the Piece? What does the writer of "Le Roman" mean by saying in his "Bill of Play" "but he" (Mr. Covet-Grab, of course,) "does not sufficiently beware of the vidders and so he is 'cotched up wid"? There is no "vidder" mentioned in the "Roman"—as far as I could see. Certainly something seems to have been left out of the story—perhaps some leaves have become missing in all the years since the "Roman" first was written—and if the Reader has read the Second Volume of these Foolish Tales he will know that the MS. pages of "Le

"Roman d'une Pussy Chat" have received considerable handling—so to speak. A few pages might, perhaps, have become lost or mislaid. The Translator is personally interested in the proper solution of all the "divers and several" matters mentioned in this Epilogue. And if the Gentle Reader is really interested in these so—"Foolish Tales" and desires that "Le Roman" shall not—like the "old Grand "Father's Clock"—have "stopped short never to go again," in other words, if the Reader wishes that a Fifth Volume of "Nonsense" should appear in print, the Translator will do what he can to see whether some memorandum or minute cannot be found in some place or other—containing the missing particulars referred to.

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T O T H E R E A D E R

Five Volumes of the Series "Nonsense" have been completed by the Author of the preceding pages, entitled as follows:

- Vol. (1) The Wonderful Story of Gert's Pussy.
- Vol. (2) The Wonderful Story of Win's Dodo.
- Vol. (3) In the Land of the Grimalkins.
- Vol. (4) Le Roman D'une Pussie Chat.
- Vol. (5) A Sequel to "Le Roman."

The first three volumes are Humorous Animal Character Sketches.

Vol. 5 is, as its title indicates, a Sequel to Vol. 4. For the general information of the readers of these pages, we may say that it will contain six Acts or Chapters, as follows:

- Act 1.* The Sage's journey for the children-guests; the happy denouement;
- Act 2.* The Sage's Return—he cometh not alone.
- Act 3.* The Faire Queen Elfie cometh to her Throne, her Crown and her place on the Yens and Postage Stamps of the Realm.
- Act 4.* The wooing and the winning of "the Bonnie Laddies"—an Idyll of a Faire Queen and of her Brunette Maid and Lady-in-Waiting.
- Act 5.* A Little Romance in the Life of a Faire Modiste Aux Dollies.
An Idyll of a King.
- Act 6.* A gallant Ex-Butler goes a-wooing.
An Idyll of an Ex-Butler.

Dr. Rogers is now engaged in writing the Sixth Volume of the Series "Nonsense," a further Sequel, to be entitled "Afterwards—being a Sequel to 'A Sequel.'"

The remaining volumes will be issued from the Press as soon as practicable.

If the interested Reader will kindly send name and address to the publishers they will be promptly notified of the publication of the succeeding volumes.

It is confidently believed that the Reading Public will find the volumes of the Series very interesting—Dr. Rogers is certainly writing on somewhat original lines. It will be noticed that the Author has not only discovered an entirely new Country—"The Land of the Grimalkins," but he has peopled it with some very interesting Characters. With the aid of the Maps or Sketches prepared by Miss Wismer, and which accompany the third, fourth and fifth volumes, the Gentle Reader will be able very speedily to become well acquainted with the topography of the Land of the Grimalkins—and to understand "the lay of the Land."

Dr. Rogers is to be congratulated upon having discovered the mysterious Subterfanean Channel leading from Lake Superior into the Land of the Grimalkins. The discovery will be a matter of interest to people who are geographically-inclined, to learned men, savants, sages and scientists.

In addition to these Humorous Books the same writer has in the course of a busy Professional life found time to prepare for the Press the following other Books which the Publishers will bring out as speedily as possible:

- (1) "Looking Backward and Forward, being the Thoughts of a Lay Man on the Eve of the Twentieth Century."
- (2) "Reveries and Reminiscences—Grave and Gay."
- (3) "The Book Which Was Never Written."

To accompany the second book lastly mentioned, the Author was enabled to obtain, through the kindness of certain friends, a large and beautiful collection of photographs, showing the wild and picturesque scenery to be found here and there all over that vast extent of country—that great North Land—now commencing to be popularly known as "New Ontario." These views include inland lakes and streams, waterfalls, mountains, valleys, and the inmost recesses of "the Forest Primeval."

The first Book contains several interesting Articles bearing on Religious and Social Subjects, some of which have already appeared in the *Daily Witness* (Montreal).

The third Book, lastly mentioned, is a little volume written

somewhat on the same lines as that popular and widely read little book, "The Gates Ajar." (Elizabeth Stuart Phelps.)

Those who have read Dr. Rogers' Articles which appeared in the Daily Witness (Montreal), "Christian Socialism and "Ethical Preaching" and "The Thoughts of a Layman Concerning the Life Which is to Come," will know the writer to be a "Broad Churchman."

All his books are written from a Broad Church standpoint, the same standpoint from which those great Broad Churchmen from whom he so frequently quotes have written—the late Prof. Drummond, "Ian Maclaren" (The Rev. Dr. Watson), the Very Rev. Dean Farrar, and the Rev. C. M. Sheldon. We have no doubt that the three volumes lastly mentioned, when published, will find many friends.

The Publishers may add, as an introduction to the writer, that he is a member of the Ontario Bar, and has received from Trinity University (Toronto) the distinction of "D. C. "L."

Dr. Rogers is a prominent Free Mason, being a Past Grand Steward of the Grand Lodge of Canada, A. F. & A. M., in the Province of Ontario.

Although this may be said to be the Author's first entrance upon the Sea of Literature, Dr. Rogers for some years has been well known in Canada as a writer with regard to Immigration and Colonization subjects: For years he has worked hard to bring to the front the claims of Northern and North Western Ontario ("New Ontario") as a desirable field for Colonization and Immigration. Letters from his pen on the subject have frequently appeared in the Press. And two pamphlets compiled by him have been published by the Dominion and Ontario Governments, respectively, and have received a wide circulation, not only in older Canada and to some extent in the United States, but also in the Old Country.

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